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## SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES OF ROBERT H. F. RIPPON, AUTHOR OF "VICTOR."

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ALTHOUGH I have never as yet been present in a circle for the purpose of testing or witnessing the physical and mental phenomena of Spiritualism, I am, nevertheless, as perfectly convinced of their reality as I am of my own existence, because I have from childhood been favoured with almost every form of spirit-manifestation, excepting that of the table movements. Special and remarkable providences and answers to prayer; the seeing, in hundreds of cases; the feeling, and indeed, twice the speaking to, and frequently the hearing spirits, have been amongst my experiences. Prophetic clairvoyance, and waking prevision, have also been granted me.

In giving a sketch of my experiences, it will, however, be necessary to adopt some kind of classification; and consequently, it is with the lowest forms of spirit-manifestation that I will commence.

When about nine years old, I witnessed a singular manifestation. One evening, just before tea, I was seated before the fire. My father was from home, but my mother and brothers and sisters were present. A candle had just been lighted, so that everything in the room was visible. The children were talking loudly, but I was reading, when suddenly, with a loud crash, which filled us with terror, something seemed to fall at our feet, and to be smashed into a thousand pieces. The sound was as loud as the report of a heavily loaded gun would be. Upon recovering our senses, our first idea was that the stone chimney-piece had fallen; each of us had the impression that we had beheld it fall. But this was not the case, neither on examination could the slightest clue be obtained to elucidate the mystery, then or later. As we lived in a wooden house situated upon a common, I remember suggesting that electricity might have been the cause.

During the following summer we were still more alarmed. My father was again from home. My mother and I sat awaiting him in the kitchen. It was a moonlight night, the hour was eleven. The kitchen was upon the same floor as the sitting-room, and opened into it. Between the kitchen and the hall or passage was a little closet, a door being on either side, so that you could reach the passage. Beneath the staircase was a place where coal was kept. At the time of which I speak, very little coal chanced to be there. Both my mother and myself had dropped off to sleep. We might probably have slept about a quarter of an hour, when we were awakened simultaneously in great terror, by what seemed to us to be a frightful explosion in the distant coal-place. The sound was similar to that which I have already mentioned. Up we sprang, and, when we felt sufficiently courageous, visited and examined the coal-place; but no trace of any disturbance there could we discover. From the small quantity of coal, we were satisfied that the sound had not been caused by the slipping down of any large piece. We returned to the kitchen, feeling exceedingly nervous. Although we remained three or four years longer in this house, we never again heard any similar sound.

Soon after this occurred a singular thing, which occasionally, at long intervals, has occurred ever since. It is a sensation and noise—an explosion, as though a gun were being fired off close to my ear; sometimes it is even as loud as the discharge of a cannon. At other times it resembles the violent bursting of a bag of air within my head or chest, as the case may be;—frequently a feeling is left in the ears such as a novice would experience after firing off a gun.

About two months after my marriage, five years and a half ago, my wife and I were sitting reading in our little room at Wycombe, in Bucks. It was nearly dusk. Above the sitting-room door was a glass sash; on the outside, the stair-case came right up to the door. It would have been difficult for any one to have stood outside and flung anything through the glass. Nevertheless we were startled by hearing a stone thrown violently through one of the panes and falling at our feet, bringing fragments of glass with it. Immediately we rose and opened the door, but no one was there. Only one other person, my wife's aunt, was in the house at the time. We lighted a candle, and examined the glass above the door, but it was not even cracked! Neither could we upon the floor discover anything which could explain the phenomenon.

The following day I was in another part of the town, giving a music lesson to a lady—I am a professor of music. We sat in a large dining room with glass doors opening into the garden. A

gas-burner hung from the ceiling. In the middle of the lesson the phenomenon of the previous evening was repeated;—the phantom stone came crashing through the glass door, appearing to strike the gas burner, bringing with it fragments of glass to the ground beside me. The lady, much startled, exclaimed that some one must have thrown a stone and broken the chandelier. No trace, however, of either stone or fragments of glass could be found; neither the glass of the doors, nor yet of the gas burners was even cracked!

Shortly after this, my residence was at Reading, where our drawing-room was filled with a collection of a high order of shells, insects, corals, eggs, &c. Frequently, when alone in this room, arranging or studying, I have heard some of my choicest specimens being taken, apparently from the shelves or drawers, and flung violently upon the ground. Still, on examination, I always found them untouched in their proper places.

For the last five years, I have been been accustomed to hear, both at home and when away, in the middle of the night, what I call the postman's knock. It generally occurs after a sudden waking. Each time that I have heard it, a letter of importance has arrived for me on the following day. When I am in lodgings, frequently this knock will have reference to the people of the house.

Upon one occasion, when I was on a visit in Bedfordshire, about four o'clock in the morning, I heard the postman's rap, this time consisting of three knocks, as in Scotland, instead of two, as with us. In the afternoon of that day, a letter arrived for me containing two others enclosed. One of the enclosures gave me the tidings of the death of my half-sister's three children within a fortnight.\*

One night, the postman's knock assumed a new variation. I had been asleep about ten minutes, when I heard something snap close to my ear; the sound resembled that made by the sudden loosing of an elastic band. I awoke to see in my room aloft at the further end, *a beautiful eagle, as of molten silver*. It was the

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\* A lady residing in London, of varied mediumistic powers, upon reading the above in MS., observed that she, also, for several years, had been accustomed to the same spiritual phenomenon, termed by Mr. Rippon the postman's knock. In her case, however, the knock varies its character, sometimes being longer and louder than that of a postman. It frequently has accompanied symbolic visions of a religious nature, and she has been then led to associate it in her mind with the words of Scripture, "*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.*" She hears it in the middle of the night, or early morning. Occasionally she hears it upon the door of the bed-room. Once, lately, instead of being a token of spiritual presence at the door, she heard it as a loud tapping at the window. This lady, also, has more than once experienced the singular explosion within her head, or close to her ear, referred to by Mr. R.; it resembled, she says, the report of a pistol, and greatly alarmed her.

exact representation of the *Falco chrysactos*. I seemed to read its name in its lineaments. The appearance of the full moon, as seen through a five-and-a-half-wide reflector-telescope, I am well acquainted with, and the gloomy molten appearance of the silvery moon, as so beheld, exactly resembles the molten silver of the eagle. I lay and watched the wonderful phantom bird resolving itself into "thin air," as does the volley of steam from a locomotive.

Footsteps and similar noises I also have frequently heard. Some years ago I went to a mansion in Essex to play for a dancing party given by the occupant. The party was over about one o'clock. It was mid-winter, deep snow lay upon the ground, and the house was full of guests. The only place where I could be accommodated for the night within the mansion was a very snug study. There was a blazing fire to cheer me, and candles and wine placed upon the table. Blankets were given me to wrap myself up in, so as to sleep comfortably in the easy-chair. The books in the room, however, I found so deeply interesting that I soon determined to sit up all night and read them instead of going to sleep, and I kept my resolution. The family, guests, and servants having retired, within an hour all was quiet. The study was situated close to a wide, dreary, stone hall, leading directly in one direction to the chief staircase, and in the other to the servants' offices. After reading in the profoundest silence for some two hours, I heard footsteps coming up the hall towards the door of the study. Having reached the door, they stopped, and the handle of the door made a noise as though the door were about to open. Then again all was still. Somewhat alarmed, I listened, and waited for what next should happen. Hearing, however, nothing farther, I rose, took a candle in my hand, and opening the door, looked forth. There was nothing visible; nothing in the hall, nothing in the servants' offices, nor yet in any of the rooms to which I could gain access. I could not at all understand the affair. "Perhaps," thought I, "some of the people here are trying to frighten me." Back I went to my study, closed the door, and sat down to my book once more. Within a few minutes, the footsteps were again heard deliberately approaching, and apparently about to enter the room. Quickly, again, I opened the door, but could neither see nor hear anything. A second examination of the hall was as fruitless as the first one. After this I waited anxiously for what farther should happen. A third time the footsteps were heard. Whilst they were approaching, I hastened to the door, placed my hand upon the handle, ready to open it at the very instant when they should reach the door. Again I opened it, and

nothing was visible—and not a sound did I then hear. I felt greatly alarmed. I resolved to search no farther. I locked the door, and went on with my reading. I heard nothing more. When the servants made their appearance in the morning, judging from their countenances, I found that they were surprised to see me look so calm after having spent the night in that room. Such another night I would not willingly spend again.

I was once in an hotel at Kingston-on-Thames; I forget its name—where, when every one was gone to bed, the door seemed to open and people enter. The landlord has repeatedly, hearing these sounds, gone down stairs, imagining that the house was not closed, and has found all locked and bolted. This occurred one night three times. I was told that there was a room at the top of the house, which had been shut up for years, because it was said to be haunted.

When residing in Essex, I occasionally was in the habit of taking long walks by myself at night, and almost invariably was accustomed to hear the sound of gigs or carts following me as I walked along. I could even hear the footsteps of the horses. Whenever I paused to listen or look behind me, the sounds would cease, and nothing reached my ear beyond the slight sounds audible upon a still night.

The power of what may be termed prevision has been one of my gifts from as far back as I can remember. When quite a child, if a person made me a promise, I could generally tell whether they would keep it or not; nay, in fact, generally knew through dreams, or waking premonitions, months before, what was about to happen to me; and throughout my life, when with friends or strangers, I have been able, at times, to feel what they were thinking about me.

My power of prevision may be divided into two classes—one by presentiments, and the other by dreams or visions.

I took a lively interest in the Crimean war. When the news arrived that the English had taken the White Batteries, and the French the Mamelon, at Sebastopol;—after I had read the newspaper telegram, a singular feeling came over me, and something seemed to say, “the English will be beaten before the month is out,” and this I told to my mother. The English were beaten on the 18th, at the Redan, seventeen days later, as near as I can remember. Immediately after that, I felt constrained to say, “Now, in a few weeks, I am sure that there will be a great battle fought, at which the Russians will be defeated, and soon after, the Malakoff will be captured.” Very shortly the battle of the Tchernaya occurred; another next great event was the fall of the south side of the city.

Whilst the Indian mutiny was going on, I remember to have

spoken in a dream with Havelock, before his death, and to have witnessed several of the conflicts which took place there.

During the Italian war, I knew of Solferino before it took place, and conversed in dreams with Napoleon and Cavour, hearing many things from them, and I had various premonitions of the peace of Villafranca before it arrived. When Garibaldi was going to Rome before the Aspromonte catastrophe, I dreamed that I saw him, and held a long conversation with him. I told him in my dream that he would fail in his object within two or three days; I even told him when it would be, and how; but when I awoke, I had forgotten the latter. In a week after this he was wounded. I have visited St. Petersburg, Vienna, Berlin, New York, &c. Each time, in my dreams, when in these places, I felt that I had been there previously.

Since the commencement of the American war, I have seen and known much regarding it; have witnessed various of the conflicts, and conversed with General Lee, President Davis and President Lincoln. On some occasions I have seen the telegraphic accounts in the papers, even to the published list of killed and wounded, three weeks before they were published. December, 1862, was an anxious time, regarding the emancipation proclamation. One night, in a dream, I spoke about it with Lincoln, and he told me that he was resolved to publish it, come what might. I mentioned my dream to various friends, and in January the news first arrived.

Since beginning to write this narrative, I have dreamed that in some future period there would be another war between Austria, Russia and Turkey. I saw a terrible battle fought; but I am not aware of the result.

One night, some time ago, I dreamed that I was living at a future period; that a person gave me a letter, which, in reading, spoke of an earthquake to take place in Jamaica; immediately after, another letter arrived from Italy, and spoke of a similar occurrence in that country, by which many cities were destroyed; a third letter came from the West Indies, speaking of an earthquake in the islands; a fourth followed, speaking of one in England, and several more to the same effect from other countries. A fortnight after this dream, it was announced that a shock of earthquake had been felt in Jamaica. The rest is prospective. Soon afterwards, I saw America so fearfully desolated by a plague, that in some towns there were scarcely living left to bury the dead. Latterly I have dreamed that the same thing was to happen to England. On the morning following this dream, in a waking state, I heard a voice say these words, as nearly as I can recall them:—"Italy will shortly go to war with Austria, but the Italian King and Government have secretly decided that if

Garibaldi, or any other person, dare to take any steps without the sanction of the King and Government, he or they will be severely punished. It is the plan of the Government that the war with Austria shall be an universal one, so that all Europe may be satisfied."

Some two or three months ago I was in Warsaw, in the spirit; I talked with General Berg, and saw a poor Polish patriot hanged, at which sight I was greatly horrified.

Toward the end of last autumn, one night, in a dream, I found myself in the Seraglio at Constantinople, or near it, and after conversing with some of the inmates, I looked out of the window, and saw large bodies of soldiers, who were marching, I was told into Asia, the Principalities, and against some Arab tribes. A few days later, the papers announced that the Turkish Government was sending off masses of troops to these places. Shortly after this, in a dream, I again found myself at Constantinople, and witnessed a great fire, which I saw even the Sultan assisting to extinguish. I was told that this was a great catastrophe. Three days later, the papers announced the burning of two thousand shops and bazaars in that city, and that the Sultan had helped in extinguishing the fire.

In February last I started in the brig *Bolivar* for South America. I began to dream, that from some cause that I could not then understand, I should be compelled to return to England sooner than I intended. Every night I dreamed the same thing. At the same time I dreamed that a Captain ———, a passenger who was on board, had to return to England immediately upon his arrival at the Isthmus of Panama, and that to do this, he begged or borrowed money from me. On our arrival at the isthmus, we went on shore to see the British Consul. Captain ———, the passenger, went to the post office to fetch his letters. I ought to have observed, that during the voyage out he had appeared to take a dislike to me. We were returning to the ship, when we met Captain ———. "Any letters?" we enquired. "Letters!" exclaimed he, "I never knew a man so driven about the world as I am! I have got a letter here from my wife, to say that after I left, a letter came from the Peruvian Government for me" (he was in the Peruvian Service), "to say that I was to remain in England to take charge of some vessels which they have been building there; so I am obliged to go back to England, and I have no money to take me." After considerable trouble, Captain ——— obtained a passage to New York free, from thence to return to England as best he might. I gave him some money to keep him whilst in New York.

For myself, I was compelled by the war to return home very much sooner than I had originally purposed, my wife, in conse-

quence of an attack of fever, returning before me. In *Victor* I have given an account of my spiritual perception of the gales in the Carribean Sea, which my wife encountered upon her homeward voyage. On my outward voyage in the *Bolivar*, one evening, standing upon her deck, I asked myself the question, "How will it be with this vessel a year hence?"

She made two more voyages, and I told the Captain that he had better choose some other port than Colon, for that he might go there once too often. Within a few weeks of the end of the year, I was in England, walking up a street in Wisbeach, when, all at once I began to recollect some dreams which I had had of again being in the *Bolivar* in rough, dangerous weather; and I said to myself, "Suppose now, that I were to see in the papers that the *Bolivar* was wrecked." A few weeks later I was very strongly impressed that this would prove to be the case. In the *Morning Star*, about a fortnight or three weeks over the year, I read the accounts of the wreck of the *Avon* and the brig *Bolivar* on a coral-reef near Colon, which I well knew. My question of the year before was answered. I felt greatly distressed about the Captain, who is a dear friend of mine. I feared lest he also was lost. I said before retiring to rest, that I should know about this before the morning. Nevertheless, I wrote to the owners of the brig in London for information. I dreamed in the night that I stood beside the wreck and spoke with the captain. He said that he and the crew were saved, but that as the wreck had occurred in the night, only themselves had been saved. Two days later I received much the same news from the shipping agents in London, and the Captain, upon his arrival in England, sent me confirmation of the truth of my dream. He has since gone in another ship, the *Countess of Fife*, to Australia. Before I heard of his arrival there, I continually dreamed of his being in the midst of bad, rough weather, since which time I have received a newspaper from him confirming my dreams. He is expected home in March, but my previsions regarding him are again so strange, that I do not know what to make of them.

During the nights of the great gales in December last, I beheld the effects of them, and various ships sinking. Soon afterward, I dreamed that I was on board a steamer that plies between this place (Boston) and Hull and Wisbeach, called the *Speedwell*. It was in the night; we were in Boston Deep—where in the body I have never yet been—when, all at once, we ran into a smaller vessel; I saw it sink; but saw that the crew were saved. For weeks I felt certain that this dream would be verified. And so it was; a few months since, the *Speedwell* ran down and sunk a vessel in Boston Deep, the crew alone being saved.



Some years ago, when residing in Staffordshire and in ill health, I one night dreamed that I was at my parent's home in Essex, and was retiring to bed. I had to reach the next flight of stairs by passing through my sister's room. This room I beheld filled with flames. The fire had even seized upon the staircase, and burnt into it. I was greatly alarmed. Just then my mother rushed up crying "Fire! fire!" I began to blow at the flames with my breath, and in a few minutes appeared to succeed in extinguishing them. I awoke in a profuse perspiration. In a few moments I dropped again to sleep, again to dream the same thing. And a third time I dreamed it. I was then certain that some thing of the kind had occurred. The next morning I told my old housekeeper that I was certain I should hear of something unusual having occurred in my parents' home. The first dream was dreamed about 11 o'clock on Monday night. On the Wednesday morning, a letter arrived from my mother, posted on the Tuesday, in which she said, "I thought last night that our house would have been burnt down. About eleven o'clock, your brothers went to their room, and, we suppose, let a spark fly from their candle. However, I smelt fire, and rushed up into your sister's room, crying 'Fire! fire!' The room was full of flames, and we did not succeed in extinguishing them before holes had been burnt in the staircase, and some of Emma's dresses had been destroyed."

When I was a child of some two-and-a-half years old, my parents were frequently alarmed by my rushing out of my bed in great terror, soon after being consigned to rest there, at the imminent risk of falling headlong down stairs. The reason of my extraordinary behaviour was this:—within about half an hour from the time of my being placed in bed, I felt myself, night after night, lifted up high into the air until I could see the earth lying far below me; this so distressed me, that, at length I sought to cast off the enchantment by rushing shrieking from my bed. On these occasions, I must have been taken in the spirit to enormous heights. In later years, these experiences were merged into the sensation of flying at great altitudes, and, latterly, into that of floating in the air, or around a room, to the amazement, as it has appeared to me, of a number of spectators.

When a child, I slept with two younger brothers, and upon several occasions was terrified by one of my brothers crying out that he saw a man sitting beside him. This occurred in the house where we heard the sounds resembling explosions. Once or twice this man appears to have been visible to my brother for a considerable time, even after a light had been brought into the room. Suddenly these annoyances to my brother ceased; but a sister, for two or three years, was more or less affected by them. In my eighth year, one night I awoke when the moon was shining

clearly into the room: to my intense terror, I perceived the figure of a man lying beside the bed close to me. The figure appeared perfectly life-like and natural. I buried my face beneath the clothes for a few moments; then becoming suddenly brave, I looked forth again: the figure had disappeared. In an agony which caused violent perspiration, I remained in prayer nearly all the night. This was the first spirit I remember to have seen. During the next few years, I recollect nothing seen except what I now believe I erroneously considered nightmare.

After an illness, spirits visited me every few nights, and sometimes two or three times in a night. When the first visitation took place, I remember that I had extinguished my candle, and drawn the curtains of the tent bedstead closely round me, not then having overcome a dread of the supernatural. I had been sleeping probably an hour, when waking suddenly, I perceived that the bed curtains were all looped up as in the day time. The candle was burning in the room, and a lady, a young, beautiful, but sorrowful creature, sat in the chair beside the bed looking at me. I was greatly terrified, and hid my head beneath the clothes; when I looked out again a moment afterwards, I found the room in darkness, but the curtains remained looped up till the next morning. The door of my room was locked. Only one person, an old woman, lived in the house, besides myself, and she slept up another flight of stairs, in another part of the house.

The lady of this vision was dressed in white. Since then I have frequently seen her. After my marriage and the second night of sleeping in our new home at Reading, "the White Lady," with a lighted candle in her hand, stood once more beside my bed, and on the side where my wife slept. On many occasions I have beheld her leaning over my wife, and appearing to regard us both with an intensely loving though sorrowful interest. Once she was weeping, and once she was smiling. I soon lost all fear regarding this spirit, and now I rejoice when I see her; but this is seldom. A vivid odyllic light always emanates from her, lighting up the room upon the darkest night. In every place I have visited I have seen her, both at home and in South America. Sometimes she appears with, and sometimes without the candle. One night I perceived her without the candle standing beside my wife; she appeared then the perfect *double*, or image of my wife.\* As I

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\* A lady endowed from childhood with the gift of "open vision," and in daily visible intercourse with the spiritual world, has frequently remarked that with a spirit of a sympathetic order it is no rare occurrence for it, through earnestly regarding another spirit, whether in or out of the flesh, to assume the aspect of the object gazed upon. This seeress therefore infers that it is as easy under certain relationships for a human being to impress a spirit, as for a spirit to impress a human being.

oked at her she suddenly moved a pace or two to the right and resumed her own original form and features. This singular circumstance I have several times observed. I have seen her lying as it were at my side a little above the body of my sleeping wife, in such a manner as to envelope my wife within her own odyllic body. I have beheld her sitting upon the bed within the space occupied by my sleeping wife, and felt her breathe upon me. Once I put forth my hand towards her face and felt it as solid as I did the face of my wife, when immediately afterwards my hand dropped powerless upon her, awakening her. Upon these occasions of which I speak I have been as thoroughly awake as I now am whilst writing this narrative.

A few weeks ago whilst my wife and I were supping at the house of a friend, whilst at table looking round behind a guest at the farther end, I beheld indistinctly "the White Lady;" she was standing, the candle in her hand, observing me. For obvious reasons I made no observation regarding her presence.

I have also several times dreamed that I saw her. Once that she took me in her arms, and pressing me to her bosom turned me to stone, thereby inflicting horrible agony. Nevertheless I believe that she is a good spirit. I generally term her "my visitor." She has also been seen by two other persons, as by whom I shall have occasion to relate.

I have seen several globes of fire hovering in the air, and actually resolving themselves into vacuity. Some short time ago I dreamed that I awoke and beheld "my visitor" under a new aspect; as a beautiful lady seated at the farther end of the room, holding a child in her arms, both lady and child having a glorious halo around their heads. I said "There are the Virgin and Child come in the place of my visitor." They were most wonderfully living. I then actually awoke and beheld hovering in the air above me a tongue of fire, similar to those pictured in the illustrations of the Pentecostal outpouring.

One night, being at Lynn with a friend who is a perfect skeptic regarding spiritual manifestations, although extremely fatigued, I was unable to go to sleep until nearly two o'clock in the morning. I could hear that my friend who slept in the adjoining room was equally restless. At length I dropped off to sleep, waking again within a few moments to perceive in the air above me, a beautiful, white-garmented spirit, floating upwards. She looked smilingly towards me, whilst with one hand she pointed towards heaven—then vanished. This apparition gave me great joy, and having beheld it, I again slept. My friend the next morning expressed his surprise at his restlessness in the night, and that, although much fatigued, he had been unable to sleep until two o'clock. I learnt on reaching home, that my

wife and a friend staying at our home, had also been unable to sleep until the same hour.

A few weeks ago I beheld a beautiful female spirit floating above me, her hands being crossed upon her breast, whilst she reclined in the air; her features were very lovely—my wife did not perceive her, although awake at the time.

In *Victor* I have referred to a very singular phenonemon, witnessed by myself. It was as follows:—I awoke one night within a quarter of an hour of retiring to rest, and beheld a singular form of inconceivable beauty, spread entirely over the body of my sleeping wife. The moon was shining into the room, and rendered every object visible. This form appeared as though the whole arterial and nervous system of a human being had alone been placed over her, being exactly the same length as her body. Through the network ramifications, I could see the portions of the white counterpane, the network being of a rich ruby colour. Whilst I lay and watched it, it grew even more vivid and palpable; then slowly rising, it stood up in the air between the bed and the window, the moonlight, and even objects through the window, being visible through its spaces. Then I noticed hundreds of small *nodules*, if I may use the term, fixed on every branch and veinlet, like fruit or flowers upon a plant, but slightly different in colour; and so slowly did the whole resolve itself into thin air, that I had some difficulty in deciding exactly when it had disappeared.

This beautiful phenonemon has a second time presented itself to me, and in a much more perfected form, every vein having the appearance of an exquisite flower. The whole as it floated across the room and disappeared, was so entrancingly beautiful that I sprang up in bed uttering an exclamation of wonder and admiration. It rose as before from the body of my sleeping wife. What can be the meaning of this phenomenon? I would give much to ascertain its signification!\*

Since writing the above I have seen a small tree, the size of a gooseberry bush, beautifully formed, with myriads of branches and branchlets, all ruby coloured, through which a strong light seemed to shine. It was gracefully floating in the air, and so afterwards vanished.

One night on board the *La Plata*, returning to England, a

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\* To two mediums, without communication on the subject having passed between them, the following partial explanation of this remarkable phenonemon was given, the two explanations being couched in nearly the same words:—

"This appearance was the spiritual body of the nervous and arterial system of the human frame. There is a spiritual body belonging to each layer or stratum of the human frame, each one being a living veil hung around the Holy of Holies, and forming the living tabernacle of the indwelling spirit. There is the spiritual body of the nerves, of the blood, of the flesh, of the bones, &c."

most singular thing occurred to me. A French gentleman occupied the berth beneath mine, and a light entered our cabin so as to render everything visible. In my sleep I experienced a strange painful bubbling at my heart. I felt life passing away from me. I imagined that I experienced all the phenomena of actual physical death,—then I awoke. The action of the heart had ceased, or been suspended. My lower jaw had fallen so that I no longer possessed the power of utterance. I felt certain that I was dying, and was giving myself entirely up to death. Beside me in the air stood a perfect human skeleton holding a dart in its hand as if ready to hurl it at me. Whilst I gazed upon the phantom with horror it slowly passed away across the cabin and disappeared. I felt restored; I sprang up—my jaw had recovered its power, whilst my heart now palpitated with a painful intensity. But what I noticed as singular was, that for some time the cabin appeared to be hung with black velvet from end to end; nor did this vanish till after the lapse of some seconds. Meanwhile I could hear the Frenchman snoring below me.

One night since my return to England I was alone and lying upon my right side, when the action of the heart again ceased. Once more I felt myself dying—I was wide awake. I heard a spirit, and felt it come and lift me right over upon my left side. Being rather hurt by the spirit in lifting, I cried out so loudly as to disturb some of the inmates of the house. Probably this spirit saved my life. The following hour I heard the postman's knock, and during the day received the three letters, already referred to, one within the other announcing the three deaths.

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ORIGINAL SONNET, BY SLUDGE, IN IMITATION OF  
BROWNING.

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O'er the gigantic billows of the earth,  
 Man's trampled heart with deep volcanic fire,  
 Striding the enamelled pavement of desire,  
 Promethean-like, still struggles into birth,  
 Uplifted, crushed, and sightless. While true worth,  
 Armed with chaotic mystery, can see,  
 Blind fate looks back on human destiny  
 That with progressive spirit marks the birth  
 Of sighs unnumbered shed for earthly good.  
 The shattered bark of power can ne'er restore  
 The famished vultures gorged with purple blood  
 In the regenerating heart's dead core.  
 Yet man looks up beyond the earth's dull lights,  
 And titum, tetum, titum, fumes and swcats, and writes.

## THOMAS COLLEY GRATTAN.

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 BY D. D. HOME.
 

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NOT alone the family, but the friends of Mr. Grattan, must have been deeply pained by the levity and reckless aspersions of an article in the *Athenæum* for July 16th, on the departure of Mr. Grattan from earth.

The writer represents Mr. Grattan as a weak-minded man, whose sole object seems to have been to "dine out," and "make love to young ladies." Thus "joyously philandering," according to the *Athenæum*, his time passed, and he "was as well as he could be, a man about town." This representation is as utterly destitute of truth as it is of feeling, or even of decency.

Mr. Grattan was educated for the law, but his tastes partaking more of a military character, he resigned it and entered the militia. He found his talents as an author productive of pleasure to his readers and remunerative to himself, and accordingly he pursued this vocation, and was still actively engaged in so doing when the "great change" came to give him rest. During the past six years I had the honour of not only seeing him a great deal, but he kindly granted me his friendship. I have heard him pass in review men and women who have long since gone to the land of spirits; and have heard him speak of men and women of our day, and I never heard him make an unkind or ungenerous remark of any one; a more kindly, gentle nature than his could not be met with. As regards his religious belief, he respected true religion wherever he saw it, or under whatever name it presented itself to him. I believe, in my heart, that Mr. Grattan was a true Christian. He began the investigation of Spiritualism some years ago, and as he once told me—"It has opened a new field of thought, and must be of the utmost importance to those whose education or surroundings has led them into that maze of doubt that is so painful to the thinking mind."

From the article in the *Athenæum*, one would think Mr. Grattan was in his dotage, whereas, he was just one of those men who are neither old in mind or manner. His body is now consigned to earth, and his spirit has gone to join the many who have known and loved him who had gone before. His mind was clear even to the last, and we have every reason to feel that "it is well with him." May God allow him to watch over those who remain, and who loved him, and to whom his memory is dear, as a good man's ought to be!

## KANT ON SPIRITUALISM.

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 By BARON DIRCKINCK-HOLMFELD.
 

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It is known that Kant, even in the first period of his illustrious career, had made the revelations of Swedenborg, or at least his *Arena Cœlestia*, an object of study. In 1766, he published an anonymous pamphlet—*Dreams of a Seer of Spirits elucidated by Dreams of Metaphysics*. Applications had been made by his friends to know his opinion of Swedenborg, and he wanted to tell the world that he had not derived the principles of his critical philosophy from that source. He says in that pamphlet—“Unhappily, the system of Swedenborg is very similar to my philosophical exuberations. My rational deductions may perhaps be thought nonsensical on account of that affinity. I declare, on account of that provoking comparison, that you must either presume more wisdom and truth in those writings of Swedenborg than the first aspect would allow, or that it is an accidental *lusus naturæ* when he is found agreeing with my system.”

Kant, in that treatise, is found to play a double game. In order to show that he by no means is caught by superstitious belief, he speaks contemptuously about the visions of Swedenborg, saying that he has found nothing real in them, and treating the matter with that irony and *raillerie*, which is the one side the author of the article on Kant and Swedenborg, in No. 55 of *Macmillan's Magazine* (pp. 74-88) has taken up. From the other side, Kant tries to show what reality, even from the standpoint of rational metaphysics, might be attributed to Spiritualism, or to the communications of the spiritual world with the natural sphere. In alluding to the three stories in circulation of Swedenborg's actual sight-seeing, he leaves the one about the conversation with the defunct Prince of Prussia without any comment, and tells us about the other two, “that they are only founded on current hearsay.” In a letter to Miss Knobloch at a later period, he, after having got better and reliable information about the facts, confirms their unimpugnable truthfulness, and retracts his formerly expressed opinions about the character of Swedenborg, and about the dreamy nature of his visions. Of course, the prior date given to the letter, either is an error, 1758 being written instead of 1768, or an intentional posterior falsification.

In the pamphlet of 1766, Kant takes the notion of spirit or of a spiritual world as his point of departure. We are allowed, he says, without any contradiction with reason or physical science, to believe in such a world or mode of existence, provided we abstract therefrom the necessary conditions of the material world,

and take care not to confound them. "The human soul," he says, "might be considered to be conjoined at once with the two worlds, of which she, as far as she makes a personal unit with the body, only perceives the material sphere, though she, as a member of the world of spirits, receives the impressions of immaterial beings, and when the connection with the body ceases, the connection with spiritual beings is the only one which remains; the consciousness of the spiritual world would then be opened to clear intuition." He continues—"I leave the circumspect language of rational science. I state at once that it is as good as demonstrated, or easily might be proved, if you go farther in the matter, or will be proved (I can't say when or where) that the human soul, even in this life, is in indissolubly connected communion with the totality of immaterial beings in the spiritual world, so that they mutually work upon each other and impressions are communicated, of which man (bound to the body) cannot be conscious in his normal state. The spirits again may receive impressions from us, without comprehending them, because the materials of conscious notions from both sides are at variance. It is rather strange that the communications with spirits are not quite common. The rarity of the manifestations is much more extraordinary than their possibility. The difference between the spheres of consciousness of the spirits and of men in the body explains the matter. But this difference neither prohibits nor makes it impossible for influences from the spirit-world to enter into our consciousness. The spiritual impressions will then take the garment of images, of symbolic figures, or even of corresponding shapes, which have no bodily reality, but appear as such in consequence of the imagination, ultimating itself in analogous images. Such manifestations, nevertheless, will neither become common nor normal, but only take place in individuals whose organs, or sensitive soul, have an uncommon strong receptivity or irritability in ultimating the images of fancy beyond what takes place in the normal state. The cause of the illusion is a real one, because the impressions are perceived through a correspondent imagery, so that they are reputed to be bodily real. It is a disease or abnormality in which the truly working impressions cannot be discerned from the phantasmagoric illusion."\*

You see distinctly that Kant speaks quite in earnest, differently from what Professor Matter in his Biography of Swedenborg, somewhat superficially, opines (*Em. Swedenborg, sa Vie, ses Ecrits, et la Doctrine, Paris, 1863, p. 376*). Kant tries to explain the visions and manifestations in a rational way, perceiving that some of them could by no means be contested. And, further-

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\* *Kant's Works*, vol. iii. Leipsic, 1838.



more, it will be seen that he is ignorant of the now prevalent mode of explaining such manifestations; *viz.*, that spirits possess, or under certain providential conditions may be allowed to use the power of ultimating their impressions or influence in the natural sphere, by forming and using natural elements in a way perceivable to the senses. He sees there are "mediums," and certain effects; he perceives the working cause to be spiritual, but he is ignorant of the mode and extent of their real and perceivable ultimation.

At all events, such testimony from a century back, and from the founder of the modern school of rational criticism, is invaluable, and is a sore reproof to the blindness of modern *pseudo* philosophers.

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## MYSTERIES OF NATURE AND OF SPIRIT.\*

By THOMAS BREVIER.

### III.—PSYCHOMETRY.

PROFESSOR HITCHCOCK, of New England, relates that; during a fit of sickness, day after day, visions of strange landscapes spread out before him—mountains, and lakes, and forests—vast rocks, strata upon strata, piled to the clouds—the panorama of a world altered and upheaved, disclosing the grim secrets of geologic revolutions of ages and ages ago, and the unshapely and monstrous rudiments of organic being. On one occasion he saw spread before him large beds of sandstone, covered with tracks such as are found in the Connecticut Valley; and the vision of these tracks enabled him to clear up, quite satisfactorily, some points in reference to them which he had previously been unable to account for by any theory he could conceive.

It is probable that it was these experiences which suggested to his mind the reflection embodied in a well-known passage in his *Religion of Geology*, in which, speaking of the influence of light upon bodies, and the formation of pictures upon them by means of it, he says:—"It appears, then, that this photographic influence pervades all nature; nor can we say where it stops. We do not know but it may imprint upon the world around us our features, as they are modified by various passions, and thus fill nature with daguerreotype impressions of all our actions that are performed in daylight. It may be too, that there are tests by which nature, more skilfully than any human photographer, can bring out and fix these portraits, so that acuter senses than

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\* This article, now revised, with additions, originally appeared as a contribution to *Weldon's Register*.

ours shall see them as on a great canvas, spread over the material universe. Perhaps, too, they may never fade from that canvas, but become specimens in the great picture gallery of eternity."

However fanciful may seem these conjectures, and however strange the experiences which probably led to them, there are on record many scattered facts which seem to give some degree of plausibility to the speculation. Dr. Draper, of New York University, thus speaks of the impressions made by light:—

If after the eyelids have been closed for some time, as when we first awake in the morning, we suddenly and steadfastly gaze at a brightly illuminated object, and then quickly close the lids again, a phantom image is perceived in the infinite darkness before us. We may satisfy ourselves that this is not a fiction of the imagination, but a reality; for many details that we had not time to examine in the momentary glance, may be contemplated at our leisure in the phantom. We may thus make out the pattern of such an object as a lace curtain hanging in the window, or the branches of a tree beyond. By degrees the image becomes less and less distinct; in a minute or two it has disappeared. It seems to have a tendency to float away in the vacancy before us. If you attempt to follow it by moving the eye ball, it suddenly vanishes.

Now the condition that regulates the vanishing phantom-images on the retina is, that when they have declined in vigour to less than one sixty-fourth of the intensity they had while in presence of the object that formed them, they cease to disturb the sight. This principle is illustrated when a candle flame is held opposite to the sun, or any light having more than sixty-four times its own brilliancy. It then ceases to be visible. The most exact of all known methods for measuring light—that by the extinction of shadows—is an application of the same principle.

But the great fact that concerns us is this:—Such a duration of impressions on the retina of the eye demonstrates that the effect of external influences on nerve vesicles is not necessarily transitory. It may continue for a long time. In this there is a correspondence to the duration, the emergence, the extinction of impressions on photographic preparations. Thus I have seen landscapes and architectural views taken in Mexico, 'developed'—as artists say—months subsequently; the images coming out, after the long voyage, in all their proper forms and in all their contrast of light and shade. The photograph had forgotten nothing. It had equally preserved the contour of the everlasting mountains and the passing smoke of a bandit fire.

Are there then contained in the brain more permanently, as in the retina more transiently, the vestiges of impressions that have been gathered by the sensory organs? Do these constitute the basis of memory—the mind contemplating such pictures of past things and events as have been committed to her custody? In her silent galleries are there hung micrographs of the living and the dead, of scenes that we have visited, of incidents in which we have borne a part? Are these abiding impressions mere signal marks, like the letters of a book, which impart ideas to the mind, or are they actual picture-images, inconceivably smaller than those made for us by artists, in which by the aid of a microscope, we can see, in a space not bigger than a pin-hole, a whole family group at a glance?

The phantom-images of the retina, as I have remarked, are not perceptible in the light of day. Those that exist in the sensorium, in like manner, do not attract our attention so long as the sensory organs are in vigorous operation, and occupied with bringing new impressions in. But when these organs become weary and dull, or when we experience hours of great anxiety, or are in twilight reveries, or asleep, the latent apparitions have their vividness increased by the contrast, and obtrude themselves on the mind. For the same reason they occupy us in the delirium of fevers, and doubtless also in the solemn moments of death. During a third part of our lives we are withdrawn from external influence—hearing and sight, and the other senses are inactive; but the never-sleeping

mind—that pensive, that veiled enchantress, in her mysterious retirement, looks over the ambrotypes she has collected—ambrotypes, for they are unfading impressions—and combining them together as they chance to occur, weaves from them a web of dreams. Nature has thus introduced into our very organization a means of imparting to us suggestions on some of the most profound topics with which we can be concerned. It operates equally on the savage and on the civilized man, furnishing to both conceptions of a world in which all is unsubstantial. It marvellously extracts from the vestiges of the impressions of the past: overwhelming proofs of the reality of the future, and gathering its power from what might seem a most unlikely source, it insensibly leads us—no matter who or where we may be—to a profound belief in the immortal and imperishable, from phantoms that have scarcely made their appearance before they are ready to vanish away!

Nor is it alone on the sensitive organization of man that permanent impressions upon the surrounding world are made, and can be reproduced.

It is well known to photographers that, after an impression has been apparently removed from a plate, so that another image can be taken on the plate without the obliterated impression reappearing, that impression will be reproduced if the plate be subjected to repeated discharges of electricity: showing that the impression had sunk deep into the plate's very substance. The image of a key on a sheet of paper will reappear in the darkness, even after many months, on the paper being placed on a sheet of hot metal. Again, as was related in a famous paper in *The Cornhill Magazine*, if a wafer be laid on a surface of polished metal, and the polished surface be then breathed upon, and if, when the moisture of the breath has evaporated, the wafer be shaken off, the eye will not be able to detect that the polished surface has undergone the least change; yet, if we breathe again upon it, it will be moist everywhere except on the spot previously sheltered by the wafer, and that spot will now appear as a spectral image, bright and dry, while all around it is dim and moist. Again and again we may breathe, after the moisture has each time evaporated, but still the spectral wafer will reappear. This experiment succeeds even after the lapse of many months, if the metal be carefully put aside where its surface cannot be disturbed. And many similar facts might be adduced. According to Sir David Brewster, all bodies throw off emanations, which enter into the pores of both solid and liquid bodies, and sometimes permeate their entire substance.

Baron Reichenbach, of Vienna, in his *Physico-Physiological Researches*, relates minutely a large body of experiments, showing that crystals, minerals, magnets, and, indeed, all bodies, especially substances highly magnetic, and still more, living organisms, throw out a subtle luminous aura. He gives lists of instances in which, in a room carefully prepared to exclude every ray of light, he found that these luminous auras were distinctly visible to persons of a certain extreme nervous sensibility, whom he

designates "sensitives." Each substance, each organism, and each separate organ, was found to have its own special aura, which could be readily distinguished by the "sensitives," who were also able to discriminate by touch the peculiar chemical and medicinal qualities of any substances presented to them. Reichenbach found upwards of *sixty* persons who were thus sensitive to this imponderable agent, to which he has given the name of *Od.* His book just referred to is devoted to the evidences of its existence and the discussion of its qualities.

Some ten years ago a pamphlet was published in London under the title of *Mesmerism Solved*, in which the writer related a number of curious experiments with shells and minerals. He found that, in the case of certain persons, different shells and stones, when taken in the hand, or even when merely placed in the immediate vicinity of these persons, excited peculiar, and sometimes strongly marked, sensations, of sympathy or antipathy, sleep or wakefulness. In the case of certain particularly sensitive persons, some stones and shells were found to be noxious to health, and, if held in the hand, to produce cramp and convulsions; while others were found to possess specific curative properties. The late Dr. Justinus Kerner in the *Seherin des Prevorst* relates similar experiments, and with like results. It is to be hoped that in any future English edition of this work, the part of it will not be omitted. Dr. Jacob Dixon in a recent valuable little treatise on *Clairvoyance, Hygienic and Medical*, narrates several experiments which he made with a clairvoyant who had the power of distinguishing by the touch the several properties of drugs and of mineral and metallic substances; while, according to various accredited writers on Mesmerism, a letter, a lock of hair, a piece of clothing or other substance worn or used by a particular individual, will suffice to enable persons in a certain mesmeric state to delineate the state of health or disease, the mental characteristics, and other particulars respecting the writer, wearer, or user of the article in question.

An American writer, Dr. Buchanan, in the first volume of his *Journal of Man*, states that in 1840, a bishop of the American Episcopal Church informed him that his own sensibility was so acute, that if he, by accident, and in the dark, touched a piece of brass, he immediately felt its influence throughout his system, and could recognize its offensive metallic taste. This remark led Dr. Buchanan to commence a series of experiments. He soon found that others possessed a sensibility similar to that of the bishop—a sensibility not only to metals, but also to sugar, salt, pepper, acids, and other substances. Out of a class of a hundred and thirty students at the Eclectic Medical College, Cincinnati, forty-three signed a declaration, that when various

medicines were enveloped in paper, so as to be unknown to them, by their holding these in their hands from five to twenty minutes distinct effects were produced on them, similar to those arising from the action of the same medicines administered in the ordinary way. So close, indeed, was the similarity, that, when an emetic was the subject of the experiment, vomiting could only be avoided by the experiment being suspended. Having arrived at this stage, it occurred to Dr. Buchanan that, possibly, sensitive persons might be affected by contact with living beings in a similar manner to that in which they were affected by mineral and other dead substances. His experiments abundantly proved that this conjecture was well founded; that, for instance, they could, by placing the hand on different portions of the head and body, experience a distinct effect, corresponding to the peculiar vital functions of the part. Nor was contact absolutely necessary. Highly sensitive persons, coming into the presence of diseased individuals, at once perceived the nature and seat of their disease; while, by placing a letter to his or her forehead, a "sensitive" instantly recognized the influence communicated by the writer to the paper on which it was written—most wonderfully accurate knowledge of the character and habits of persons previously unknown to the "sensitives" being frequently obtained in this way.

The perusal of these statements of Dr. Buchanan stimulated the curiosity of Mr. Denton, a well-known lecturer on Geology, in Boston, and he resolved to try how far he could verify them by experiment. He found in his sister a "sensitive" so highly impressible that she could not only read character from letters, but, at times, could see and correctly describe their writers, even to the colour of their hair and eyes. Being intensely interested in geology and palæontology, Mr. Denton thus reasoned with himself:—If there can be impressed upon a letter the image of the writer and his surroundings during the brief time the paper was subjected to their influence, may not rocks have received impressions of surrounding objects, some of which they have been in the immediate neighbourhood of for centuries, and may it not be possible for them to communicate these in a similar manner to sensitive persons; thus giving the clue to the conditions of the earth and its inhabitants during the vast eras of the past? The thought was followed into action. To quote his own statement:—

I accordingly commenced, some ten years ago, a series of experiments with mineral and fossil specimens, and archæological remains, and was delighted to find that, without possessing any previous knowledge of the specimen, or even seeing it, the history of its time passed before the gaze of the seer like a grand panoramic view; sometimes almost with the rapidity of lightning, and at other times so slowly and distinctly, that it could be described as readily as an ordinary

scene. The specimen to be examined was generally placed upon the forehead, and held there during the examination; but this was not absolutely necessary, some psychometers being able to see when holding a specimen in the hand. The results of some of the experiments made at various times, I give in the words of the psychometer at the time. In some cases the phraseology has been slightly changed, the idea, never; and generally, the exact words are given.

The experiments detailed in Mr. Denton's book\* are so startling, that to many they will appear wholly incredible. It is, however, always unsafe to pronounce a verdict simply from a seeming *à priori* improbability. Arago has reminded us that he is a bold man who, outside mathematics, pronounces the word "impossible" at all; and in the midst of the astounding discoveries which science has brought to light on every hand during the last half century, it would indeed be rash to discredit asserted phenomena merely on account of their strangeness. We should rather examine them the more carefully the stranger they are, in the hope that, perchance, they may furnish a key to unlock some of those mysteries of nature which have hitherto baffled our investigations.

Mr. Denton's ten years' experiments have led him to the conclusion that radiant forces are passing from all objects to all objects, every moment of time, and photographing the appearances of each upon the other. Every action, every movement, is thus infallibly registered for coming ages. "The pane of glass in the window, the brick in the wall, and the paving-stone in the street, catch the pictures of all passers by, and faithfully preserve them. Not a leaf waves, not an insect crawls, not a ripple moves, but each motion is recorded by a thousand faithful scribes, in infallible and indelible scriptures." As this applies to all past as well as present time, nature, in this view, becomes, in the words of Professor Hitchcock, "the great picture gallery of eternity." *There* are stored up the faithful memorials of the early world—the tides of liquid fire, the rushing floods, and steamy vapours—*there* the first dawn of vegetation—*there*, every club-moss and tree-fern, every radiate and mollusc. From the polyp to the pachyderm, the images of all are preserved. Every tribe, nation, and race of men has sat for its portrait, and *there* they all are faithfully daguerrotyped in this Divine picture gallery for all time. These pictures may not be brought out by any known chemical application, "but in some individuals the brain is sufficiently sensitive to perceive them when it is brought into proximity to the objects on which they are impressed." More than this. Not objects alone, but *sounds* are registered.

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\* *The Soul of Things; or, Psychometric Researches and Discoveries.* By WILLIAM and ELIZABETH M. F. DENTON. Boston: Walker, Wise, & Co., 1863. An English edition, edited by a Clergyman of the Church of England is published under the title of *Nature's Secrets*.

Nature is not only a picture gallery, but a whispering gallery, too. Nothing we see is ever effaced. Nothing we hear ever lies out:—

There is a storehouse of latent sounds containing all we ever heard. The lullaby sung by our cradle, the patter of the rain upon the roof, the sighing of the winds, the roll of the thunder, the dash of the falling water, the murmur of the stream, the oath of the inebriate, the hymn in the church, the song at the concert, the words of wisdom and folly, the whisper of love, all are faithfully registered. And our experiments (continues Mr. Denton) have convinced me of what is still more difficult to believe, that all sounds register themselves on all objects within their influence, and these phonotypes, as they may be termed, are almost, if not entirely, as enduring as the objects themselves.

Mr. Babbage, in the Ninth Bridgewater Treatise, has a vein of thought so similar to that in the foregoing passage, and expressed in language so striking and impressive, that I here present it in juxtaposition:—

The pulsations of the air, once set in motion by the human voice, cease not to exist with the sounds to which they gave rise. Strong and audible as they may be in the immediate neighbourhood of the speaker, and at the immediate moment of utterance, their quickly attenuated force soon becomes inaudible to human ears. The motions they have impressed on the particles of one portion of our atmosphere, are communicated to constantly increasing numbers, but the total quantity of motion measured in the same direction receives no addition. Each atom loses as much as it gives, and regains again from other atoms a portion of those motions which they in turn give up.

The waves of air thus raised perambulate the earth and ocean's surface, and in less than twenty hours every atom of its atmosphere takes up the altered movement due to that infinitesimal portion of the primitive motion which has been conveyed to it through countless channels, and which must continue to influence its path throughout its future existence.

But these aerial pulses, unseen by the keenest eye, unheard by the acutest ear, unperceived by human senses, are yet demonstrated to exist by human reason; and, in some few and limited instances, by calling to our aid the most refined and comprehensive instrument of human thought, their courses are traced, and their intensities are measured. If man enjoyed a larger command over mathematical analysis, his knowledge of these motions would be more extensive; but a being possessed of unbounded knowledge of that science would trace every the minutest consequence of that primary impulse. Such a being, however far exalted above our race, would still be immeasurably below even our conception of infinite intelligence.

But supposing the original conditions of each atom of the earth's atmosphere, as well as all the extraneous causes acting on it, to be given, and supposing also the interference of no new causes, such a being would be able clearly to trace its future but inevitable path, and he would distinctly foresee and might absolutely predict for any, even the remotest period of time, the circumstances and future history of every particle of that atmosphere.

Let us imagine a being invested with such knowledge, to examine at a distant epoch the coincidence of the facts with those which his profound analysis had enabled him to predict. If any, the slightest deviation existed, he would immediately read in its existence the action of a new cause; and through the aid of the same analysis, tracing this discordance back to its source, he would become aware of the time of its commencement, and the point of space at which it originated.

Thus considered, what a strange chaos is this wide atmosphere we breathe! Every atom impressed with good and with ill retains at once the motions which philosophers and sages have imparted to it, mixed and combined in ten thousand ways with all that is worthless and base. *The air itself is one vast library, on whose pages are for ever written all that man ever said or woman whispered.*

There, in their mutable but unerring characters, mixed with the earliest as well as with the latest sighs of mortality, stand for ever recorded vows unredeemed, promises unfulfilled, perpetuating in the united movements of each particle, the testimony of man's changeable will.

But if the air we breathe is the never-failing historian of the sentiments we have uttered, *earth, air, and ocean are the eternal witnesses of the acts we have done.* The same principle of the equality of action and re-action applies to them: whatever movement is contributed to any of their particles is transmitted to all around it; the share of each being diminished by their number, and depending jointly on the number and position of those acted upon by the original source of disturbance. The waves of air, although in many instances perceptible to the organs of hearing, are only rendered visible to the eye by peculiar contrivances; but those of water offer to the sense of sight the most beautiful illustration of transmitted motion. Every one who has thrown a pebble into the still waters of a sheltered pool, has seen the circles it has raised—gradually expanding in size, and as uniformly diminishing in distinctness. He may have observed the reflection of those waves from the edges of the pool. He may have noticed also the perfect distinctness with which two, three, or more waves, each pursues its own unimpeded course, when diverging from two, three, or more centres of disturbance. He may have seen, that in such cases, the particles of water where the waves intersect each other partake of the movements due to each series.

*No motion impressed by natural causes, or by human agency, is ever obliterated.* The ripple on the ocean's surface caused by a gentle breeze, or the still water which marks the more immediate track of a ponderous vessel, gliding with scarcely expanded sails over its bosom, are equally indelible. The momentary waves raised by the passing breeze, apparently born but to die on the spot which saw their birth, leave behind them an endless progeny, which, reviving with diminished energy in other seas, visiting a thousand shores, reflected from each, and perhaps again partially concentrated, will pursue their ceaseless course till ocean itself be annihilated.

The track of every cause, of every vessel which has yet disturbed the surface of the ocean, whether impelled by manual force or elemental power, remains for ever registered in the future movement of all succeeding particles which may occupy its place. The furrow which it left is, indeed, instantly filled up by the closing waters; but they draw after them other and larger portions of the surrounding element, and these again once moved, communicate motion to others in endless succession.

The solid substance of the globe itself, whether we regard the minutest movements of the soft clay which receives its impression from the foot of animals, or the concussion arising from the fall of mountains rent by earthquakes, equally communicates and retains through all its countless atoms their apportioned shares of the motions so impressed.

*Whilst the atmosphere we breathe is the ever-living witness of the sentiments we have uttered, the waters and the more solid materials of the globe bear equally enduring testimony of the acts we have committed.*

To the same effect Professor Hitchcock remarks:—

The discoveries of modern sciences shew us that there is a literal sense in which the material creation receives an impression from all our words and actions that can never be effaced; and that nature, through all time, is ever ready to bear testimony of what we have said and done. Men fancy that the wave of oblivion passes over the greater part of their actions. But physical science shews us that those actions have been transfused into the very texture of the universe, so that no waters can wash them out, and no erosions, comminations, or metamorphoses, can obliterate them. The principle which I advance in its naked form is this:—*Our words, our actions, and even our thoughts, make an indelible impression on the universe.* Thrown into a poetic form, this principle converts creation

Into a vast sounding gallery;  
Into a vast picture gallery;  
And into an universal telegraph.

This proposition he endeavours to sustain, by an appeal to



well-established principles of science. He dwells, in particular, with great force on "the doctrine of re-action," *i. e.*, "the mutual or reciprocal action of things one upon another." Thus, if a body fall to the earth, the earth re-acts upon it and stops it, or throws it back. If light falls upon a solid body, the body re-acts upon the light, which it sends back to the eye with an image of itself. This principle of re-action is a universal law. Of the various kinds of re-action, Professor Hitchcock particularly specifies and elucidates the mechanical, optical, electric, odylic, chemical, mental, and geologic. The whole chapter entitled "The Telegraphic System of the Universe," in his *Religion of Geology and its Connected Sciences*, is, in its connection with this subject, well worthy of careful consideration.

Mr. Denton records a hundred and eleven experiments made through his "sensitives," or, as he calls them, "psychometers"—from the faculty which he supposes them thus to exert in measuring "the soul of things." The term "psychometry" was, however, I believe, first applied by Dr. Buchanan. In passing, I may remark that women are more susceptible than men to these psychometric impressions,—Mr. Denton says, "probably in the proportion of five to one."

Though directed mainly to throw light on geological science, Mr. Denton's experiments also embraced investigations with respect to geography, meteorology, metallurgy, archæology, and history. In these experiments no mesmeric state was induced, nor any biological influence exerted. On the contrary, Mr. Denton tells us that he has repeatedly tried to influence the mind of psychometers, but always unsuccessfully. "Many specimens have been examined when no one knew what they were, and yet the results were quite as accurate as at any other time; indeed, in almost every case, statements have been made, and ideas advanced, of which we had not previously the most distant thought." A fragment of lava, a fossil bone, a piece of rock not larger than a pea, a bit of meteoric stone, or of Roman brick, placed on the forehead, or held in the hand, sufficed to bring the "psychometer" into such a relation with the beings and things which had stamped their influence upon these objects, that she was able to describe them with all the minuteness, and, it is claimed, so far as could be ascertained, with all the fidelity of an actual observer. In some cases, the relation was so intimate that, in describing an extinct animal, for instance, the psychometer seemed to feel, while the experiment continued, as if identified with the animal itself. Mr. Denton deems it probable—

That all fossil remains of animals are imbued with the feelings of the animals of which they formed a part, and that, under their influence, the psychometer for the time being feels all that was felt by them; and thus the characteristic

actions of monsters that have been extinct for millions of years can be accurately realized and described. This branch of psychometry (adds Mr. Denton) may be termed psychopathy; and I find that generally, in examining specimens, seeing and feeling go together; though some psychometers only see, while others feel—and most readily—the influence of a specimen, but can see nothing.

It is not necessary that the specimens used in a psychometric experiment should be seen by the psychometer; in the majority of the instances related by Mr. Denton, it was neither seen nor known in any way. Frequently, one would be selected at random from twenty or thirty specimens wrapped in paper so as all to look alike. Sometimes the same specimen would be examined repeatedly when additional details would be given each time; or, it would be submitted to the examination of several psychometers successively, in which case all would agree in describing the same objects, scenes, and sensations. There would, of course, be a difference in verbal statement, as in the case of travellers successively visiting and describing the same spot, but without any conflict in the accounts given. Where, as was sometimes the case, objects passed with great velocity before the psychometric vision, it became impossible to catch even the outline, however striking; but it was found that, by an effort of the will, these flying visions could be retarded, and brought to pause. At other times, though a smaller area only was visible, every object viewed seemed immoveably fixed, while all beyond was in impenetrable darkness. The *rapport* of feeling is more frequent than that of vision. Where there is one who possesses the power of *seeing* psychometrically, Mr. Denton thinks there are probably three who possess the power of *feeling* psychometrically; but the experiments detailed by him are chiefly those of psychometric vision. It would be difficult to give an adequate idea of these visions without quoting from the substance of the work more largely than space permits; but a few of Mr. Denton's experiments, together with some of his observations on them, are here subjoined:—

Fragment of lava from Kilauea, Hawaii, one of the Sandwich Islands.

*Mrs. Oridge.* Specimen unseen by her. She had no idea of what it was, nor did she know that I possessed any such specimen.

"I see the ocean, and ships sailing on it. This must be an island, for the water is all around.

"Now I am turned from where I saw the vessels, and am looking at something more terrific. It seems as if an ocean of fire was pouring over a precipice, and boiling as it pours. The sight permeates my whole being, or the terror which it inspires. I see it flow into the ocean, and the water boils intensely. I seem to be standing on one side of it."

The feeling of terror, produced by the sight, did not entirely pass off for an hour. It seemed to be as great as if she had actually stood upon the spot, and beheld the whole as an ordinary spectator.

Those who have read Mr. Coan's account of the eruption of Kilauea, in 1840, will see the accuracy of the description. The specimen of lava examined, which was not larger than a hazel-nut, was, I understand, ejected from Kilauea during that eruption, when as Mr. Coan says, "a rain of fused minerals of the

breadth of Niagara, and of a gory red, fell in one emblazoned sheet, one raging torrent, into the ocean."

Out of a number of minerals and fossils lying upon the table, Mrs. Denton, with closed eyes, picked up one, no one knowing its character.

"I am in the ocean, deep under the water. I can see a long way, for the water is clear. There are millions of minute coral polyps busily at work. I am looking down upon them. I observe one kind of coral that is very peculiar; it is a foot in diameter at the bottom, and rises in terraces to the top, where it is much smaller. I should judge this specimen to be coral, or something worked over by coral, though it feels nothing like it."

On examination it proved to be a piece of flat coral about an inch long and an eighth of an inch in thickness, from the Niagara group of the Silurian formation, at Lockport, N. Y. This is a specimen of various experiments tried in a somewhat similar manner and with like results, conclusively demonstrating that the biological explanation is an incorrect one.

The following is an instance of identification of the psychometer with the object of psychometric vision:—

A small fragment of the enamel of a mastodon's tooth, cut off so that it might not be recognized, being about one-twentieth of an inch in thickness and three tenths of an inch in diameter. The tooth was dug, by miners in search of lead, out of a crevice thirty feet beneath the surface, near Hazel Green, Wisconsin.

*Mrs. Denton.* She did not see it and had no idea of what it was.

"My impression is that it is a part of some monstrous animal, probably a part of a tooth. I feel like a perfect monster, with heavy legs, unwieldy head, and very large body. I go down to a shallow stream to drink. (I can hardly speak, my jaws are so heavy.) I feel like getting down on all fours.

"What a noise comes through the wood! I have an impulse to answer it. My ears are very large and leathery, and I can almost fancy they flap my face as I move my head. There are some older ones than I. (It seems so out of keeping to be talking with these heavy jaws.) They are dark brown, as if they had been completely tanned. There is one old fellow with large tusks, that look very tough. I see several young ones; in fact, there is a whole herd.

"My upper lip moves strangely. I can flop it up. It seems strange to me how it is done.

"There is a plant growing here higher than my head: it is nearly as thick as my wrist, very juicy, sweet and tender, something like green corn in taste, but sweeter." (Is that the taste it would have to a human being?) "Oh, no," (appearance of disgust on the countenance) "it is sickish, and very unpleasant."

Even the electric flash which darted to the earth millions of years ago is still visible to the psychometer, and the rain that followed it may still be felt. A small piece of sandstone slab, bearing the impression of rain-drops, being placed by Mrs. Denton upon her forehead, she said, "I see a zig-zag flash of lightning; it divided before it reached the earth. Now I am in a shower, and feel as if drenched by rain."

An experiment made with a tertiary fossil, obtained near Calabazal, in Cuba, gave Mr. Denton a wider view than he ever possessed before of what this psychometric power is destined to do for science:—

*Mrs. Denton.* "I see streams of water running down the side of a hill; the water is very much charged with foreign matter. There are rocks visible, that seem to have been formed by deposits from the water. There are fossils in the rocks, but they differ from any I ever saw before.

"I go back in time, and see a volcano and a shower of fire. There is a long dark strip of rock from the low ground up to the volcano. The land seems very

unstable; rocking and heaving up, and sinking down, sometimes appearing above the water, and then vanishing beneath. I seem to be on an island. The eastern part is less stable than the western. All the western part is under water now. The island is longer from east to west than from north to south. It extends south of east further than directly east. I think it is south from here. The coast is very singular. I see what would probably be called a barrier reef along the coast, and so regular is a portion of it, that it looks artificial.

"The climate is delightful. I seem to be on the north side of the island, west of the centre, and somewhat inland.

"I have a glimpse of a grove, with vines stretching from tree to tree, and naked boys climbing on them.

"Farther south and east there is a strip of land richer than here. This seems to have been washed by the sea. There is a kind of point here, and I see what looks like an artificial ditch."

At the time when this examination was made I did not really know on what part of the island of Cuba this specimen was obtained, but on writing to Mr. McDonnell, of Madison, Wis., from whom I had received it, he informed me that "Calabazal is twelve miles south of the city of Havanna, at a point where a railroad crosses a stream, half-way between Havanna and Santiago."

How wonderfully correct, then, were the statements of the psychometer! Cuba is seven hundred and fifty miles long from east to west, with an average breadth of about sixty miles, consequently, the island is "longer from east to west than from north to south." Its direction is E.S.E., hence "it extends south of east farther than directly east." The mountains increase in height from the west to the east end of the island, where they are diffused over nearly the entire surface, some of them being nearly 8,000 feet high, so that it is probable the eastern part has been less stable than the western. The specimen was taken from "the north side of the island," "west of the centre," and twelve miles from the coast; and consequently, "somewhat inland." It came from a place "south from here," which has a "delightful climate," and from a tertiary bed, containing many fossils, differing from any that Mrs. D. had seen before. It was taken from a railway cutting, which may explain the ditch that was seen.

Let it be remembered that Mrs. D. did not see the specimen; that she had no conception whatever as to the character of it, or the place from which it was obtained; and that I did not know many of the facts stated during its examination.

In another experiment, a small portion of an aerolite was held by a Mrs. Foote in her right hand, she having no idea of its character. Several similar experiments were made with this specimen.

*Mrs. Foote.* "This is curious. There is nothing at all to be seen, and I feel as if I was in the air; no, not in the air either, but in nothing—no place. I am utterly unable to describe it; it seems up, however. I feel as though I was rising, and my eyes are carried up; but I look around in vain, there is nothing to be seen.

"I see clouds now, but nothing else. They are so close to me that I seem in them. My head, and neck, and eyes are affected. My eyes are carried up, and I cannot roll them down.

"Now the clouds appear lighter and lighter, and look as though the sunlight would burst through them. As the clouds separate, I can see a star or two, and then the moon instead of the sun. The moon seems near, and looks coarse and rough, and paler and larger in size than I ever saw it before.

"What a strange feeling comes over me! It seems as if I am going right to the moon, and it looks as if it was coming on to me. It affects me terribly." She was too much affected to continue the experiment longer.

A small stalactite, obtained from a cave in Indiana, was given to a Mrs. Taylor for psychometric examination. She said:—

I go straight along the road; there is water near, and a cave into which I

enter. I see two persons going in with lights. Stalactites hang from the top all over. The two stand looking up. It is so damp and cold it fairly makes me feel chilly. It is a large roundish place. Off at a distance seem places where you can go still farther, but I cannot go; it makes me shudder. Now I go to the right, there is a basin of water; and to the left, room after room. Stalactites hang down like curtains, and shine most beautifully.

Mr. Denton, who had himself visited this cave and obtained the stalactite, says:—"The accuracy of this description surprised me, accustomed as I was to the faithfulness of the psychometric pictures."

In another experiment, Mr. Denton placed in a box,—each wrapped separately in a piece of paper, so that no one of them, by ordinary sight, could be distinguished from another,—fragments of:—the Porcelain Tower, China; a mastodon's tooth; a bone of a fossil fish; a brick from ancient Rome; limestone from Mount Lebanon; the Temple of Minerva, Baii; obsidian from Mexico; sandstone from Connecticut Valley; limestone from Mackinaw; hornstone from the Mount of Olives; fossil wood from Kansas; lava from Mount Vesuvius; antimony from Borneo; lead ore from Wisconsin; boulder from Wisconsin; silver ore from Mexico; ærolite; white marble from Anti-Libanus; lava from Kilauea; conglomerate from Lake Superior; gold-bearing quartz from Australia; glacial scratched rock from Wisconsin, and basalt from Fingal's Cave, Staffa. Mrs. Denton took out one of these (basalt from Fingal's Cave), no one knowing which it was, and described what she saw and felt. The description is too long to quote, but Mr. Denton, after transcribing it, observes:—"Had she visited it (Fingal's Cave) in person, a more accurate description of the cave and its surroundings, according to the statements of many visitors, could hardly have been given."

A small piece of the porcelain tower of China led to a very picturesque description of the place and people. A piece of charcoal, "no larger than a hazel-nut," from a beam in Herculaneum, revealed to the psychometer a life-like picture of the buried city and its inhabitants. We learn much of one of the "Tombs of the Kings" near Thebes, and of its builders, from a fragment of limestone. A piece of dark trap presents us with the autobiography of a boulder. From a fossil bone, apparently cut with a sharp instrument to extract the marrow, a very unflattering revelation is obtained of the human or semi-human inhabitants of the early world. A specimen of petroleum leads to the revelation that that substance does not proceed from coal-beds, as generally supposed, but from coral polyps, principally of the Silurian and Devonian periods. Indeed it would seem that the psychometer, by putting a piece of matter, whatever be its nature, to her forehead, is able to see (either with eyes closed or open) all that that piece of matter (figuratively speaking) ever saw, heard or

experienced; not always, indeed, in the order of time, or to the full extent of that experience, but generally so.

It is affirmed that psychometry is eminently practical and utilitarian, and among its practical uses it seems that the tracing of mineral veins may be included. If this can be substantiated, it seems not unreasonable to anticipate with Mr. Denton that, when psychometry shall be properly cultivated, instead of mining being the hazardous business it is at present, digging for metals will be one of the most certainly profitable of occupations. "To the miner," says Mr. Denton, "psychometry gives eyes that see through granite almost as readily as through glass; and he shall trace the course of veins deeply buried under drift accumulations as readily as he does the windings of rivers on the surface." He adds:—"Frequently, in travelling over the country in the cars, Mrs. Denton will say to me, 'There is oil under here,' or 'There is lead or copper in this neighbourhood;' and, in many cases, I have afterwards verified such statements, though neither of us, apart from psychometry, knew anything respecting these deposits." The historian, the physiologist, the physician, the astronomer, indeed all inquirers into the secrets of nature, may be benefited by psychometry, as well as the geologist and the miner; to say nothing of its importance to the moralist and the divine. Impressed with this belief, no wonder Mr. Denton gets excited, as he contemplates all the (supposed) wondrous possibilities before us. In a burst of enthusiasm, he exclaims:—"What books are yet to be written, what histories recorded, and what light to be shed, on great problems that have agitated the minds of thinkers for thousands of years! I have good reason to believe that trained psychometers will be able to travel from planet to planet, and read their present condition minutely, and their past history. It may be asked, "How shall we be able to know whether the statements that are made are correct or not?" (Ay, there's the rub! Mr. Denton is, however, ready with his answer.) "The revelations of one may be compared with the revelations of another; and we shall thus be able to judge of their correctness, as we do the statements of astronomers, who see with their sky-piercing tubes what is invisible to the ordinary spectator."

Mr. Denton further assures us that psychometry supplies the *rationalé* of many mysteries and "superstitions," such as dreams, fortune-telling, hallucinations, relics, amulets, and what are called spectral illusions, but which he thinks should rather be called "re-visions." Of these spectral illusions, or re-visions, he particularly instances and examines the cases detailed by Dr. Abercrombie, in his *Inquiries concerning the Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth*, and the well-known narrative of Nicolai, the Berlin bookseller. Not exactly of the same class as

these, but admitting of the same explanation, are such singular experiences as those related in the *Autobiography of Heinrich Zschokke*, to whom it sometimes happened that, on his first meeting with strangers, their past life, or some particular scene in it, with all its attendant circumstances, passed involuntarily, yet perfectly distinct, before him.\* Taking a still higher flight, Mr. Denton maintains that psychometry reveals the powers of the soul, and gives evidence of our future existence.

We are told that the objects of psychometric vision are seen by a peculiar light, which is unperceived by the outward sense of vision, and which Mr. Denton designates "latent light." Between this and ordinary light there apparently exists a wide and, as yet, unbridged chasm. In the psychometric examination of an object, the light by which its surroundings are observed corresponds to the light of the locality and period from which it was obtained, or to which the examination is confined. Much is said in the book concerning the nature and derivation of this light, and concerning various hypotheses about it.

To one it seems a necessity that this light, derived, as he supposes, from all bodies radiating light, whether natural or artificial, as well as from all objects reflecting such light, has, as it were, been drunk in and treasured up by the very elements of which the specimen is composed, and from the earliest date of its existence, only to be given off now, when the magnetism of the human brain shall have induced sufficient activity in the infinitesimal particles of the hitherto latent mass. "While," he would contend, "to assume that all things, everywhere, are continually reproducing themselves or their images upon the face of all else, is, at most, but a step in reasoning from the known to the unknown, and one that may be taken with apparent security; we have then," he will add, "only to admit that these daguerreotyped images are visible to the sensitive eye of the psychometer, and we have the whole matter before us, with outlines so well defined that a few experiments would be quite sufficient to set at rest at once and for ever all questions of doubt." To another, however, this method of accounting for these phenomena is the veriest folly. He believes that the human being combines two distinct natures. That the outer—the physical—is simply the medium through which the inner—the spiritual—sustains to the more gross materials of the outer world that relation which nature evidently regards as of vital importance in the perfecting of the highest workmanship of her hands. That, while an intimate organic relation between these two natures is a positive necessity to the continued exercise of that functional power which is dependent upon the will, there may be, and often is, a partial and temporary suspension of that union or relation, granting to the spiritual nature comparative freedom from the dead weight of the inert physical. That the spirit, in this semi-independent

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\* The passage, quoted by me in full, may be seen in the *Spiritual Magazine*, vol. iii, p. 341. In another paper, *Spiritual Magazine*, No. 9, vol. ii., will be found an account of the spiritual perceptions of nature of Andrew Jackson Davis, in his first clairvoyant vision, as given in the *Great Harmonia*. He saw the metals in the earth like living flames, and lights and flames emanating from every portion of the living structure of man and animals; the most distant regions and their varied productions were present before him. Every mineral, vegetable, and organic structure had its own peculiar and coloured atmosphere. Creation seemed opened to him, and he saw not only the forms of things, but their internal nature and qualities. The reader may also compare the similar experiences of Fox, Bohm, and Swedenborg.

existence, assuming a measure of its native force, is, as it were, capable of annihilating time and space, and living over in an hour the countless lives of the ages. That the office of the specimen, which, by being placed upon the forehead, is brought as nearly as possible to the brain itself, is merely, by its magnetic influence, to direct the spirit, or rather, perhaps, to lead it in the pathway of its own experience, when thus comparatively free from its earthly moorings. This, to his understanding, is a satisfactory solution of the entire problem.

Mrs. Denton (who writes Part II. of the work, consisting of "Questions, Considerations, and Suggestions" growing out of the facts given in Part I.) is not prepared to accept either the one or the other of these hypotheses as the only legitimate answer to the inquiry. There may be, she concludes, truth in both of them, but till a greater number and variety of facts are collected, any attempt at a perfect theory, she considers, would be premature. It will not, be strange, indeed, if but few persons are as yet prepared to accept the facts. Most readers, probably before they get to the ending of Part I., will pause to take breath and ask, "What next? and next?" And those who know most of these mysteries of nature and of spirit, of which the best informed know so little, will most readily agree with Mr. Denton, that we are, as it were, but coasting along some headland in an unknown ocean; and that great continents lie beyond, to be discovered by future explorers.

I may, in conclusion, state that Mr. Denton is an Englishman, a graduate of one of our universities, and that both he and his wife are persons of unblemished reputation.

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## THE DAVENPORT BROTHERS.

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OUR readers will probably be interested in the following Report concerning the phenomena occurring through the mediumship of the Davenport Brothers. It was drawn up, as will be seen, with special reference to eliciting the attention of scientific men, and hence with a minuteness of detail that would not be necessary in a merely popular narrative.

The author, Dr. Loomis, is a member of the medical profession, and is Professor of Chemistry and Toxicology, in Georgetown Medical College. He is, as we are assured, a man of no small attainments in science, and was induced to make this investigation at the instance of friends who desired to know the truth relative to these phenomena, and who, from his known scientific acquirements, skill, and thoroughness, had full confidence in his ability to ascertain the truth. • He entered upon the examination, as we learn, with a strong prejudice against the genuineness of the phenomena, and his conviction of their reality is, therefore, all the more valuable.



Mr. A. E. Newton, in some comments on the Report in the *Herald of Progress*, remarks:—

“It will be seen that Professor Loomis, while candidly confessing the action in these phenomena of a ‘NEW FORCE’ (that is, a force hitherto unrecognized by the so-called scientific world), still ignores the agency of spirits. This matters little, since every well-informed investigator knows that the Professor only needs a more full acquaintance with this ‘new force,’ or perhaps only a more full reflection on what he has already witnessed, to be driven to the necessity of referring it to the active participancy of invisible intelligences.

“Precisely what the Professor means by the somewhat ambiguous language of his second concluding remark, is a little uncertain. If no force was exhibited ‘beyond that of the boys,’ why does he afterwards admit a ‘new force?’ It may be that the boys possess both ‘*spiritual* and *intellectual* power or force’ equal to that exhibited, though there is no sufficient evidence of this. But did not the facts clearly indicate both *intellectual* and *physical* power *distinct from* that exercised by the boys? Is it at all likely, on the basis of any facts known to science, or on the basis of common sense even, that these boys *by any action of their own minds* produced and controlled the phenomena described? Would a boy, with his hands bound securely behind him, and his feet under him, be likely, without physical effort, to *strike himself* a ‘sudden, unexpected, and tremendous blow on the head,’ so as to cause himself to cry out as described? I put it to the Professor’s science, or his good sense either. The probability from the narrative would seem to be that the boys did *not* do these things themselves. If the boys did *not* do them, then it is clear from the statement that they must have been done by an *intelligent power* distinct from the boys. An *invisible intelligent power* is but another name for a *spirit*.

“Again. Is it a common thing for boys to possess sufficient ‘intellectual power’ to *form hands* out of invisible material—real, tangible, visible hands and arms, that can ring bells, wield the fiddle and bow with dexterity, slap astonished committee-men vigorously, untie and take off cravats carefully, &c., &c.—at a distance of two to four feet from their persons, while their own hands are tied tightly around them? Can the Professor himself do any such thing, even with the aid of all known science? If not, then was there not in these achievements some slight *indication* at least of an ‘intellectual power or force *beyond* [as well as *distinct from*] that of the boys?’

“I trust Professor L. will reflect on these points with his usual acuteness, and some time give the public the results. If, however, it should be made to appear that the boys themselves

(and if they, then, doubtless, others also), do possess these marvellous powers, such a discovery will be of scarcely less importance to the race, and no less difficult of credence than is the theory of spirit-agency. I opine, however, that a more full examination will only show beyond question the interference of invisible beings."

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DR. LOOMIS'S REPORT.

"At one end of Willard's Hall is a large platform about fifteen feet square, and three feet from the floor, carpeted. ~~At~~ the back side of this platform, resting on three horses, about eighteen inches high, with four legs each, (one inch in diameter), was a box or cabinet in which the phenomena occurred. It is necessary to describe the box critically, in order to be able to understand the occurrences which took place.

"After a very careful examination took place, I find the box seems to be made for two purposes only. 1st, to exclude the light; and 2nd, to be easily taken apart and packed in a small space for transportation. It is made of black walnut boards, from one-fourth to one-half of an inch in thickness. The boards are mostly united by hooks and hinges, so as to be taken apart and folded up. The box is about seven feet high, six feet wide, and two feet deep, and the back was one inch in front of the brick wall of the building. It has three doors, each two feet wide and as high as the box, so that when the doors are open the entire interior of the box is exposed to the audience. Across each end and along the back are boards about ten inches wide, arranged for seats firmly attached to the box. These are one-half inch walnut boards. At the middle and near the back edge of each of these seats are two half-inch holes through which ropes may be passed for the purpose of tying the boys firmly to their seats. The entire structure is so light and frail as to utterly preclude the idea that anything whatever could be concealed within or about its several parts by which any aid could be given in producing the phenomena witnessed. The top and bottom of the box are of the same thin material, and not tongued and grooved, so that the joints were all open. The floor was carpeted with a loose piece of carpet, which was taken out. The entire inside of the box was literally covered with bruises and dents, from mere scratches to those of an eighth of an inch deep. I examined the box thoroughly in all its parts, and am satisfied that there was nothing concealed in it, nor was there any way by which anything could be introduced into it to aid in producing the phenomena. The phenomena exhibited may be divided into several classes.

"a. Before the performance commenced the audience chose a committee of three, of which I was one. The other two were

strangers to each other and to myself. I never saw them before that evening, have never seen them since, and do not know their names. One of the committee—a stout, muscular man, over six feet in height, professionally a sea-captain, and who remarked to me as he was performing the operation, that he had pinioned many prisoners—tied one of the boys in the following manner, viz.: A strong hemp rope was passed three times around the wrist and tied; it was then passed three times around the other wrist and tied again—the hands being behind the back. The rope was then passed twice around the body and tied in front as tightly as possible. Before this was completed the wrists had commenced swelling so that the flesh between the cords was even with their outer surface—the hands puffed with blood and quite cool. The circulation was almost completely stopped in the wrists. The boy complained of pain, and said, “Tie the rope as you wish, but I cannot stand it. I am in your power, but you must loosen the rope.” I remarked to the Captain that it was cruel to let the rope remain so tight as it was—that security could be gained without being unnecessarily cruel. We examined his wrists again, and the Captain *decided not to loosen the rope*. The whole work of tying the boy was closely watched by me during the entire progress, and thoroughly examined when done; and I must say that very little feeling was exhibited for the boy. No human being could be bound so tightly without suffering excruciating pain. His hands were released in about fifteen minutes. I then examined his wrists carefully. Every fibre of the rope had made its imprint on the wrists. I examined them a second time, one hour and thirty minutes after, and the marks of the rope were plainly visible. He was pinioned as tightly around the body. After being thus tied by his hands, he was seated at one end of the box, and a second rope being passed around his wrists, was drawn both ends through the holes in the seat, and firmly tied *underneath*. His legs were tied in a similar manner, so that movement of his body was almost impossible. All the knots were a peculiar kind of sailor knots, and entirely beyond reach of the boy’s hands or mouth.

“The other Davenport Boy was tied in a similar way by another member of the committee. After being tied, I carefully examined every knot, and particularly noticed the method in which he was bound. The knots were all beyond the reach of his hands or mouth. He was as securely bound as the other, the only difference being that the ropes were not as tight around the wrists. This one, as the other, was tied to his seat, the ropes being passed through the holes, and tied underneath to the ropes attached to his legs. Thus fastened, one at one end of the box and one at the other, they were beyond each other’s reach.

" Thus far I was perfectly satisfied of three things:—  
*1st.* There was in the box no person except the boys, bound as above described ; *2nd.* It was physically impossible for the boys to liberate themselves ; *3rd.* There was introduced into the box nothing whatever besides the boys and the ropes with which they were bound.

" These being the conditions, the right-hand door was closed ; then the left-hand door ; and finally the middle door was closed. At the same time the gas-lights were lowered, so that it was twilight in the room. Within ten seconds two hands were seen by the committee and by the audience, at an opening near the top of the middle door ; and one minute after the doors opened of their own accord, and the boy bound so tightly walked out unbound—the ropes lying on the floor, every knot being untied. The other boy had not been released, and a careful examination showed every knot and every rope to be in the precise place in which the committee left it.

" The doors being closed as before, with nothing in the box besides one of the boys, bound as described, hand and foot, with all the knots beyond the reach of his hands or mouth, in less than one minute they opened without visible cause, and the Boy walked out unbound, every knot being untied.

" *b.* The box being again carefully examined, and found to contain nothing but the seats, the boys were placed in them unbound, one seated at one end and one at another. Between them on the floor was thrown a large bundle of ropes. The doors were then closed. In less than two minutes they opened as before, and the boys were bound hand and foot in their seats. The committee examined the knots and the arrangements of the ropes, and declared them more securely bound than when they had tied them themselves. I then made a careful examination of the manner in which they were tied, and found as follows, *viz* : a rope was tightly passed around each wrist and tied, the hands being behind the back ; the ends were then drawn through the holes in the seat, and tied underneath, drawing the hands firmly down on the seat. A second rope was passed several times around both legs and firmly tied, binding the legs together. A third rope was tied to the legs and then fastened to the middle of the back side of the box. A fourth rope was also attached to the legs and drawn backward, and tied to the ropes underneath the seat, which bound the hands. This last rope was so tightened as to take the slack out of the others. Every rope was tight, and no movement of the body could make any rope slacken. They were tied precisely alike. I also examined the precise points where the ropes passed over the wrists, measuring from the processes of the radial, ulnar, and metacarpal bones. I also

carefully arranged the ends of the ropes in a peculiar manner. This arrangement was out of reach and out of sight of the boys, and unknown to any one but myself. The examination being ended, the following facts were apparent :—1st. There was *no one* in the box with the boys ; 2nd. There was *no THING* in the box with the boys, except the ropes ; 3rd. It was physically impossible for the boys to have tied themselves, *every one of the knots* being beyond the reach of their hands or mouths, and the boys being *four feet* apart ; 4th. The time elapsing from the closing of the doors to their opening—less than two minutes by the watch—was altogether too short for any known physical power to have tied the ropes as they were tied.

“c. The boys being tied in this manner, one of the committee was requested to shut the doors. He stepped forward, closed the right-hand door, also the left-hand door, and was about closing the middle door, when two hands came out of the box, one of which hit him a severe blow on the right shoulder. The committee-man was partly in the box and felt the blow, but did not know what struck him. He immediately threw open the doors, but nothing could be found but the boys, tied as before. I carefully re-examined the positions of the ropes, and *found them as I had left them*. The hands were seen by the audience distinctly. The lights had not been turned down, and the hands were seen in the plain gas-light, and remained in sight several seconds. Having satisfied myself of the reality of the hands, having seen the blow given by one of them, which was sufficient to turn the committee-man partly round, I examined them with reference to their position in relation to the boys, anatomically considered. The middle door had not been closed, and the committee-man had not left the box ; both boys were firmly tied to their seats, and the gas was fully lighted. The hand that appeared to the left of the committee-man might have been, *so far as position and anatomical relation was concerned, the right hand of the boy at the left side of the box* ; but the hand that struck the man could not have belonged to either boy. It was more than four feet from either one, and at least two feet too high ; and, had either boy been sufficiently near, it *must have been a right hand on a left arm*.

“d. The box was then carefully examined again, and nothing could be found except the boys bound as described before. There were then placed on the floor between the boys, a bell, a violin, a guitar, a tamborine, and a trumpet. This being done, the left door was closed, then the right door ; and as the committee-man was closing the middle door, the brass trumpet, weighing about two pounds, jumped up from the floor, struck the top of the box with great force, and fell out on the floor. This took place while the committee-man stood facing the box. The door was wide

open, and the committee-man stood partly in the box. The boys were again carefully examined, and found to be tied as at first. I examined the ropes that I had carefully and privately arranged, as before described, and found them as I had left them.

"e. The trumpet was placed back, and all the doors closed. Within ten seconds the violin was tuned and began to play; at the same time the guitar, tamborine, and bell began to play, all joining in the same tune. Part of the time the bell was thrust out of the window in the upper part of the middle door, by an arm, and played in sight of the audience. While the music was being made there were a multitude of raps, both light and heavy, on all parts of the box. The first tune was played and repeated, and a few seconds of comparative quiet followed, broken only by the instruments jumping about the box, and a few raps. Soon a second tune was begun, in which all the instruments joined as before. In the midst of this tune the doors suddenly opened themselves, and the instruments tumbled about, some one way some another, and part fell out on the floor. The time between the stopping of the music and the opening of the door was not a single second. I went at once to the box and found both boys bound, hand and foot, as I had left them. I examined the ropes particularly around the wrists, and found them in the precise position in which I had left them, measuring from the processes of the radial, ulnar, and metacarpal bones. I also found the ends of the ropes under the seats, which I had, as previously described, privately arranged in a peculiar manner, in precisely the same position as I had left them.

"Inferences.—1. There was no one in the box with the boys; 2. Nothing was in the box except the boys, bound, and the instruments; 3. The boys could not untie themselves; 4. The boys could not have been untied, as the position of the ropes could not have been retained—having been privately arranged by myself, out of their sight and reach; 5. The time between the playing of the instruments and the opening of the doors was totally insufficient for the boys, had they been untied, to have tied themselves—it being less than *one second*; 6. The boys could not have tied themselves, all the knots being beyond their reach.

"f. The boys being tied as before, I got into the box and seated myself on the back seat between them. I then placed my right hand on the legs, just above the knees of the boy at my right, and my left hand in a similar way on the legs of the boy at my left side. My hands were then bound to them with ropes. They were placed in such a manner that I could detect distinctly any movement of the superficial muscles of the thighs of both boys. I did this for the purpose of ascertaining whether the body of either boy moved.

"After being thus tied, the committee carefully examined the box, and found nothing in it except the two boys and myself bound. The instruments before named were then placed in the box beside my feet, the violin being in my lap. In this position the doors were closed. Instantly loud raps were heard, and within two seconds after the closing of the door, and while we were all still, and not a muscle of either limb, as I could perceive, moved, I felt fingers passing all over my head and face. It could not have been imagination, as the fingers took hold of my cravat, unfastened it, and took it off my neck as carefully as I could have done. One of the boys spoke to me, and said, "Will you request the instruments to play?" I asked, "Do you mean me?" He replied, "Yes." I then said, "Will the violin play?" Instantly the violin, rose up from my lap in front of my face, and began to play. It was out of reach of the boys. The boy at the left then said, "Will you notice the order in which the instruments move." I replied, "I will." He then said, "Go gently." "Will the violin go to the top of the box?" Instantly the violin, still playing, went to the top of the box, at least two feet beyond our reach, all the while playing. The guitar was at the same time playing at my side. While the violin was moving about, playing over our heads, the boy at the left said, "Will the spirit strike the stranger with the instrument gently on the head?" The boy at the right said, "Strike gently. Don't strike hard." Instantly the tamborine came up in front of me, tapped one cheek, then the other, then the top of my head, and, as quick as thought, struck the right hand boy a tremendous blow on the top of the head. He cried out, as any one would, hurt by a sudden, unexpected blow, "Oh!" The trumpet then moved on the floor to the front of the box, and up the side, out of our reach, to the top of the box, then sailed around with the violin at least two feet above our reach. The tamborine came up my left and balanced itself on the top of my head; at the same time hands were passing over my face, head, and sides. At this point the doors suddenly opened. The violin and trumpet dropped from the top of the box, and the tamborine fell from my head. During all this time I did not move; neither did the boys, as far as I could perceive.

"I know that it was impossible for them to have moved their hands from behind their backs without my noticing it. I know they did not rise from their seats. I know that there were not hands or fingers enough to have played the guitar, violin, and tamborine, and passed over my face and body as they did at the same time had both boys been untied. Had it been the hands of the boys on my face, they could not have had time to have replaced them and tied the ropes before the doors were opened. Such quick and violent motions of the boys must have caused

perceptible motion of the legs. But I know they were perfectly still during the whole time I was bound to them. When I was untied I again examined the ends of the ropes, which I had previously adjusted as before described, and found them as I had left them at first. The instruments were then taken out, and nothing was left in the box but the boys, bound as described. The doors were closed, and in less than one minute they opened, and the boys walked out, every knot being untied. This closed the evening's performance.

“ REMARKS.

“ In order that this paper may be correctly understood, it is proper to make the following statements:—

“ 1. I am a disbeliever in Spiritualism.

“ 2. I could see nothing in the phenomena above described that was indicative of spiritual or intellectual power or force beyond that of the boys.

“ 3. I never spoke to the Davenport Brothers before, nor have I spoken to them since.

“ 4. I have written this as an account of phenomena which I have witnessed as correctly as I am capable of doing ; precisely as I would any other phenomena.

“ 5. I endeavoured to be critical in my observations, that they might be valuable ; and, for the same reason, accurate in the expression of them in this paper.

“ 6. I felt during the exhibition that the phenomena were produced by the means of a power with which I was unacquainted.

“ 7. I was not at all impressed with the idea that this new force was under the control or direction of a spiritual presence, but fully under control of the minds of the boys.

“ 8. I did not make the examination for the purpose of sustaining any theory, or for curiosity, but for the express purpose of accurately noting the phenomena that occurred.

“ 9. I am acquainted with the general methods of sleight-of-hand performers, and am perfectly satisfied that these phenomena must be accounted for in some other way.

“ 10. I cannot believe that deception was used. As far as I could perceive, the phenomena were real, and must be accounted for through the agency of a new force.

“ 11. If the human mind is competent to give evidence of observed phenomena, then the above statements may be relied on as correct.

“ (Signed,) S. L. LOOMIS.”

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## Notices of Books.

### THE NEW PARIS SPIRITUAL JOURNAL— “L'AVENIR.”

SPIRITUALISM continues to make its steady advance on the Continent. Turin, Palermo, and Naples in Italy and Sicily have their spiritual journals; Antwerp has one, and one is projected in Holland. In France almost every large city, especially in the South, has its journal, shewing that there is a large spiritual public to maintain them. The *La Verité* of Lyons has created a front rank for itself by the ability with which it is conducted. The *La Ruche Bordelaise*, the *Sauveur des Peuples*, and *La Lumière de Bourdeaux* all hold on their way vigorously. Besides three other journals in Paris, we have now *L'Avenir*, a weekly sheet, written with great smartness, and promising to win great popularity. Its opening article, in which it meets the objections of cavillers and supports its views, not only by good reasons but by great living authorities, is extremely piquant and lively. Besides this there are many excellent articles in the first four numbers that we have seen, which shew the vigour and resources of M. Alis D'Ambel, the editor.

Amongst the facts, there is one relating to a disturbance in Decazeville, quoted from the *Annali dello Spiritismo*, similar to those occurring lately at Poitiers in the house of Count D'O——. A correspondent writes to *La Provincia*, a paper of Turin, saying, “After the article in your journal relative to the manifestations at Poitiers, I beg to introduce to your notice a like event taking place in our town. In the house No. 3, in the street San Lorenzo, belonging to Signor Elia Levi Deveali, and contiguous to the house of Signor Calvi at the corner of the street San Martino, a noise, sometimes loud, sometimes less so, is heard like an explosion of fire arms, or the blow of a very heavy substance, upon something hard and hollow. Frequently the blow is so violent that it shakes the house. At first these blows were followed by considerable and varying intervals, but for these two months they have obeyed the commands of a young girl, who discovered by chance that they responded to her voice.

“The public curiosity has naturally been excited; it has occupied itself with the strange phenomenon; all sorts of comments have been made on it; persons of intelligence have studied it to the best of their ability, but no one has been able to form a plausible theory concerning it; only some priests have said that it is a spirit, and some good women have repeated it. The

thing having made a great noise the authorities have intervened, but I am sorry to say in a more officious and less liberal manner than those in France; for instead of studying, of making research, they have taken the more convenient mode of accusing the occupant of the house and his family of complicity in the cause, though nobody can see what advantage it can be to that honest tradesman to have such odd music in his abode. The identical occurrence at Poitiers, and others which have occurred in places around here, sufficiently acquit the honest tenant of the house of having any concern in producing these noises, and in thus endeavouring to revive the superstition of a past age." The editor of *L'Avenir* sensibly suggests that these extraordinary disturbances, for which no natural cause can be discovered by the shrewdest and most vigilant police, are plainly but to draw the public attention in different countries to the study and examination of Spiritualism.

In another part of *L'Avenir* we have an account of a great banquet of Spiritualists in Lyons, at which M. Edoux, the editor of *La Verité* gave the following admirable toast:—"To all the precursors of Spiritualism, the third revelation of God. That is to say, to all those who, whether under the Decalogue or the Gospel, have prepared and preserved across the far-off ages, that advent of the spirit which we witness to-day. To all the martyrs of the idea and of the progress of humanity; to all the martyrs of the Inquisition, of intolerance, of fanaticism. Yes, to all! For the very humblest of them must often have seen in their dungeons and on their flaming piles, the Great Messenger of the Celestial Father who said to them, 'God is not vengeance, is not implacable wrath. He is love, mercy, and pardon; hope and believe in Him.' To you all in a word who, in sweat and tears, have sown a seed to germinate under the sun of the future. To you, dear souls, many of whom are this day assisting us spiritually. To all the labourers of our age; to all the workmen of God, whether they are sent on mission here below, whether they have been called to this august function by the grace of God, to all from the greatest to the least. In the first place to him who has popularized this truth amongst us, who has taken the amorphous mass of dictations of the spirits, and erected them into a doctrine—to Allan Kardec! Then to all those, near or far off, who have come forward in aid of him. To all the brethren who dissent from us on verbal points, or from *amour-propre*, to all the incredulous, to all the adversaries. Let us drink, in a word, to the eternal brotherhood of all mankind. To the future of humanity, to the reign of God, to the extension of Spiritualism." This toast was, as it deserved, received with a very tempest of applause.

In conclusion, we must observe that even the clever editor of

*L'Avenir* does not know everything, and has made a curious mistake in attributing to Queen Victoria the authorship of the work translated and published under her patronage; a work exceedingly well known, namely, "Die Stunden der Andacht," by Zschokke—"Hours of Devotion." As a *royal* production, *L'Avenir* expresses its astonishment how such a deep thought and divine philosophy could find its way into a great, busy, and luxurious Court, and he gives ample extracts. Though not *royal* compositions in one sense, they are so in another, and he could not well have more enriched his pages by anything else—only *sum cuique*.—W. H.

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### PRIMEVAL MAN.\*

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THIS work is given to the world by the writer of *An Angel's Message*, and *Ecce Homo*, and the mode of its production is alleged to be the same. This mode is thus stated in the preface:—

The writer of this book is well aware of the impression it must convey to ordinary readers. It is her province to write of that which does not pertain to any earth-born knowledge. She has not sought for any superhuman wisdom: the whole of its contents have been given to her in much weakness, and in entire dependance upon the power which has guided her to its completion. . . She exercises no control over the pen when it is placed upon the paper; neither can she restrain the flow of words which then immediately become audible in her spirit-ear: the perception of her own natural thought is all the while perfectly distinct to her, and the inward dictate is likewise distinct; there is no confusion. . . The writer is herself instructed through the instrumentality of the pen; for, until the words were, one by one, traced upon the page, did no such knowledge as they convey gain access to her mind. She has invariably read her manuscript in much astonishment, and has so expressed her feelings to others when speaking of, or shewing them, her closely covered sheets.

In placing her hand upon the paper with the pen prepared to write, she has never, in any instance, known what the first word would be; and after it was written did not know to what it would lead. Thus word by word has been given without any premeditation whatever. There was no need to consult the Scriptures in the selection of appropriate texts, for they came written out before she was aware of their being needed. If she did surmise that a certain subject or explanation would probably ensue, it has usually been given in a form as opposite as possible to that anticipated; and the exposition of the spiritual method of proceeding has caused the writer of it more surprise than anything else, for it did not accord with her then existing supposition; shewing that her natural mind did not in the least influence the spiritual revealment, which invariably flowed on in entire independence of her thoughts and feelings. The only conditions, however, on which a communication could ever be received were, entire dependance upon God, not desiring to receive information on one subject more than on another; the mind being perfectly calm and free from every kind of excitement. Sitting down to write under these circumstances the pen flows on, she having only to keep it upright and read the writing as it appeared under the eye.

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\* *Primeval Man: The Origin, Declension, and Restoration of the Race. Spiritual Revelings.* London: J. BURNS, Progressive Library, Camberwell.

The readers may take this statement as they each one feel inclined. Some doubting; others believing. Some may account for this phenomenon in one way, some in another way; but there it is, a phenomenon still. If there should be discovered a solution upon totally natural grounds, to the entire exclusion of the spiritual theory set up in these, and in the pages of spiritualistic works in general, still the production of this work would be none the less phenomenal. We are, however, not on that account anxious to insist on its truth, or claim to infallibility. . . . It is our desire to caution every reader of this book that he judge of it by his own intuitive perceptions of what is truth; not allowing the manner of its production to have any weight in the balance of his decision upon it. Truth cannot be made more true by any amount of asseveration; neither can that which is untrue be made pure undefiled verity by the implication of a miracle in its enunciation.

The principle of Scriptural exegesis applied in this work may be gathered from the following passages:—

The Bible history is now in process of enactment; man is coming forth of God; is descending into Eden; is being placed there by God; is declining in the interiors of his spirit; is undergoing Eve-severance; is partaking of forbidden fruit given to him by her; she is, at this moment, listening to the beguiling speech of a serpent. Every incident of the narrative is now in process of enactment. If it could be stayed for one second, no infant could appear upon the earth. All has passed upon you and me. The unborn babe is coming forth by the same route we have traversed.

These Gospel narratives are enduring unto everlasting life; no wave of time can ever obliterate their stamp on nature; they are *Divine manifestations*, not merely natural ones once occurring on the plains of Palestine. Jesus is, at this day, in the interiors of the land your homes rest on. He is, at this day, sitting at your board, walking at your side, taking your little ones in his arms and blessing them; preaching in the temples of your souls. In the market place, and in the crowded thoroughfare may his Divine voice be heard, if the inward ear be kept unstopped; yea, while you hasten on your way to accomplish some mundane matter, Christ and his apostolic band are passing that way too.

There is no age, no time, in which Jesus does not tread in the footprints of humanity. He is with us *now*. He is in us *now*. With some He is receiving birth, with others he is undergoing crucifixion. So with every event; one is not more dependant upon period than another; we each receive Him in accordance with our inward state of reception. With some He walks, with others He sits in a house. With some He dines, with others He sups. Some see Him only passing by, others hold converse with Him in secret. Some are healed by Him in one way, some in another.

To many, perhaps the majority of readers, this book may seem more curious than satisfactory. This may in part arise from the circumstance mentioned by the spirit author at page 64 of the work. "Be it understood," he says, "that I do not attempt to prove assertions, I make them for the enlightenment of the natural understanding, which must unravel them by the light of its own taper." It may, perhaps, be questioned whether assertions without attempt at proof (especially when they do not carry their own evidence with them), can tend much to the enlightenment of the natural understanding, except so far as they may stir up the mind to a more vigorous exercise of its own powers. This, however, the book before us is calculated to do with many minds. Its theme is important,

and is becoming one of the most vital questions that agitate the Christian Church. The mode in which it is here treated will certainly be new to the majority of readers, and if it does not in all points meet with their approval, its tone and spirit, at least, can scarcely fail to be acceptable in the midst of the agitated and often angry controversies of the time.

This much, we believe, may be fully relied upon: that the writer has exercised no control over the pen which has produced the pages of this book. She is known to be a calm and earnest Christian woman, wholly incapable of making a statement that is not strictly true, and, therefore, the method of its production must under any circumstances be a matter of deep interest, and the Spiritualist will pause before condemning what he may not understand, in the confidence that the teachings conveyed in this book may be as much above his comprehension as the knowledge he possesses through Spiritualism is above the comprehension of those outside of the spiritualistic philosophy.

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### THE POET AND OTHER POEMS.\*

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ACHSA W. SPRAGUE died in the summer of 1862. She was well known across the Atlantic as an early and constant advocate of the Spiritual Philosophy, and as a devoted friend of every philanthropic and reformatory enterprise of the time. Raised from a bed of sickness,—from a seven years' period of agony and gloom, and restored to comparative health by the aid of beneficent spirits, and by following the course of treatment they prescribed; she was next trained by them, by a course of mental discipline, for public speaking; and for eight years, almost till her death, she laboured in this field, in a disinterested spirit, with willing earnestness, and marked success. Her poems were frequently written or dictated by her with an ease and rapidity which she and many of her friends regarded as a consequence and evidence of inspiration. As a memorial of a generous, catholic, zealous worker for humanity, this volume, we hope, will be welcomed by many to whom the author was personally unknown, as it will certainly be by a large circle of devoted friends.

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\* *The Poet and other Poems*, by ACHSA W. SPRAGUE. Boston: WHITE & Co. London Agent: J. BURNS, Progressive Library, Camberwell.

## Correspondence.

### SOME REMARKS ON "SPIRITUAL SPHERES AND ATMOSPHERES," PARTICULARLY ON No. V.

By LIBRA-ÆQUABILIS.

*To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."*

Amongst the many excellent sentiments and views in the articles appearing under the above title there are some one-sided and exaggerated statements which it would be culpable to let pass as sound and true. They are neither one nor the other. In one of the earlier papers the causes of the unhealthiness of Rome and similar places were said to be not at all what they are commonly supposed to be—not at all material, but all spiritual. Sinks, cesspools, want of proper sewers, and the like nuisances were represented to be not unhealthy as mere physical nuisances, but because they contained a spiritual aura. This appears to me far from correct. As we are spirit and body, so we are subjected to spiritual and not the less to bodily influences. To come to the conclusion that putrid and putrifying matter and gases, arising from sinks and cesspools, only affect us from spiritual causes, is to forget that we are encased in material bodies as readily affected by material poisons as our spirits are by spiritual poisons. This is running out of the materiality of the age into an equally one-sided and morbid extreme. That Rome has plenty of spirit poisons in her nobody questions, but there can be as little question that if its old foundations were dug out, its old tombs and catacombs and subterranean channels, with their foul airs were opened up to the day, and proper drainage applied to the city and country round, Rome would become as sound and healthy as it was in the days of its ancient Pagan greatness, without necessarily becoming one whit the more spiritually clean. Our sanitary commissioners have done a great deal to promote our health, but I am not aware that all their drainings and whitewashings and ventilations have, in any degree, given us an atom more of health to the soul than it had before; for with all our increase of civilization, I cannot recall an age, even the most corrupt of Pagan Rome, in which spiritual disease, sensuality, corruption of moral principle, dishonesty, political and mercantile, the spirit of murder, both public and private—that which destroys lurkingly with knife, bludgeon, or the old so-called "life preserver," and that which in America blows to pieces a million of fellow men by very infernal machinery, for the preservation of a Union—tyrannies, treading down with bloody feet weak nations and weak persons; foul lust stalking through the cities of so-called Christendom, with an audacity and amplitude that was never yet reached by Gentilism—I say we can cite no past age, no epoch anterior to Christianity in which all this enormity of spiritual unwholesomeness was more enormous. Reason and common sense, and not this spurious sort of spirituality, shew us that each part of our nature is exposed to its particular evils, and neither can be grappled with by dealing with one of them only—though it may be the spiritual.

I find some portions of the last number of this series equally unsound. At p. 370 we have it asserted that "It is utterly in opposition to the first principle of Divine revelation to say that Christ wrought miracles to prove his Divinity." Now it would be easy to produce from the New Testament abundant proofs of the inaccuracy of this statement. Your readers can readily turn to them. I content myself with one, which is as good as a hundred. Jesus, on going to perform his great miracle, the resurrection of Lazarus, told his disciples that He was glad that He was not there before he died—for what reason? "To the intent that ye may believe." He performed this great miracle of recalling the dead to life with the avowed purpose of proving to his disciples his Divinity. He kept back when sent for by the distressed sisters two days, that Lazarus might die, and thus, as He says himself, to augment the proof of his Divine power in the eyes of those who were to proclaim through the whole world that Divine Messiahship.

A few lines more and we have "the pretended evidence of miracles and historical facts is rapidly vanishing, and will speedily disappear entirely." My

belief, and that based on a long life's observation, is totally opposed to this assertion. With "pretended evidences" I have nothing to do, but the genuine outward evidences of the Gospel and the Church of Christ are as real and essential as the inward evidences. They are not pretended; they are real evidences, and I believe that if those who are labouring hard for it could destroy "the historical facts" of Christianity, Christianity to mankind would become an impossibility. Such, in spite of all the spiritual power and life of Christianity, is the debased and sensualized condition of even the Christ-professing world; that we see wonderful spiritual demonstrations now sent forth as the only things which have force to draw men's minds to a faith in a spirit existence at all. True, "we must either have an internal evidence, or the Church itself will vanish;" just as the body will not live without the soul. It is from the internal power that these outward manifestations proceed. The author says,—“Spiritual things are their own evidence, and it is entirely inverting the true order of existence to expect spirit to give evidence to spirit by the mediation of matter.” Why the coming of Christ himself in the body was the sublimest example of “spirit giving evidence to spirit by the mediation of matter!” Had not this been a grand and absolute necessity, Christ would never have assumed a material form. Spirit might have gone on influencing spirit without any material agency for ever. But that it was necessary that matter should influence spirit in matter was shewn by Christ's outward physical advent. It was this very thing which this writer denies, which was the occasion for the Christian dispensation itself! And the fact is, that we see this extraordinary assertion of the writer's every day contradicted still. The modern spiritual manifestations are precisely “spirit giving evidence to spirit by the mediation of matter,” and they are thus bringing more conviction of our immortal destinies to doubting minds than any other means have done for centuries.

It is perfectly clear that the writer of these articles is an enemy to the modern spiritual manifestations, and his articles are an undisguised attempt to undermine them. Is it in the *Spiritual Magazine* that this attempt is to be made? Is it in these pages that we are to listen to a denial of the very principles on which this magazine is conducted? I for one energetically protest against it. That “spiritual things are their own evidence” to the spiritual, every reader of the *Spiritual Magazine* will admit as a truism, but to unspiritual and materialized minds we have long enough seen that material evidences must be afforded. You cannot cause men to see pure spirit by its own naked entity. It is spirit operating on matter that awakes the attention of such outward minds, and thus convincing them of spirit, draws them inward. I have often used the simile of Jacob's ladder to illustrate this fact. That great spiritual ladder has many steps leading up from earth to heaven, each on the plane of some particular condition of spirit; in the highest regions its steps are all spirit, but the feet of the ladder are let down to the very earth to reach the most earthly of men, and must have a material and palpable form or such men could not perceive it, could not seize it, and thus raise their eyes to the glories above, and thus commence that upward ascent which leads to infinite spiritualization.

And this the writer soon after admits with a singular forgetfulness of his logic, when he tells us that “it is sometimes mercifully permitted to our weakness to have such evidence, untrustworthy as it is, yet the soul as it becomes open to heaven and God has other and far better evidence in its own consciousness.” Now if it be “mercifully permitted to have such evidence”—that is, of course, because it is absolutely necessary for us in a certain depraved and unspiritualized condition to have it—not having this in such a condition is, if we admit the merciful permission, a total bar to an approach to the spiritual, and this concedes the whole question of outward manifestations and historic facts. God, who knows best, sends them because they are necessary, and who is he that says “they are not necessary?” “Spiritual things are their own evidence, and evidence of miracles and historical facts will speedily and for ever disappear.” Yes, let us get rid of historical facts, and the triumph of the Materialist is complete. A religion without historical facts is an egg without its shell, a soul without its body, a thing real in itself, but deprived of its power of manifesting itself to those to whom Christ was sent to preach—not the righteous, not the already

spiritualized, but to the sensualized sinners. It is the glory of Christianity that it is the only religion which has a complete body of historical evidence, commencing with the creation of man, and verified by fulfilment; and it is against this great bulwark of evidence that the sceptical philosophy of the age is warring, certain that if it could destroy its credit, the spirituality of our faith would have lost its great door of entrance—its great power of resistance to the unspiritual propensities of fallen mankind.

I protest, therefore, against the additional assertion that "miraculous proof is no proof of *Divine* operation." *Divine miracle is Divine proof.* The proposition contains a fallacy in its generality, and overlooks a distinction which exists in miracle as clearly as heat exists in sunbeams. That the devils can perform miracles the Old Testament shows and the New one affirms, but the devils cannot perform *Divine* miracles. Their miracles are matters of astonishment, but not of beneficence. They are not performed to bless men but simply to amaze them; those of Christ are of a directly Divine character—healing of the sick, raising the dead, feeding the hungry, comforting the destitute, removal of all sorts of bodily as well as mental injuries and disabilities, and calling men to a faith not only in the living present power, but in the love and paternal goodness of God. *Such* miracles no devil ever could or ever will perform. Christ has assured us of that in the great test of all truth—"By their fruits shall ye know them."

If this be true then, as it undoubtedly is, nothing is plainer than the absolute necessity of outward miracles as well as inward power. Since men have taught that miracles have ceased, and brought the so-called Christian world to believe the decline of Christian faith has been rapid and in its actual life, general. Men have preached and written in vain: crime, wars, those horrid demonstrations of hell upon earth, sensuality and materialism have risen into triumphant ascendancy, the very spirituality which this writer contends for has vanished, and we have now a world calling itself Christian, standing up amid the ages, amid a superficial civilization, as the most monstrous and impudent sham that the earth ever exhibited. They are outward manifestations, that, instead of the Jewish law, are now become our schoolmasters to lead us to Christ. Mere rudiments, as the highest physical manifestations are, they are those rudiments without which the multitude can no more arrive at the spirit than they can learn to read without the A B C, those simple but indispensable keys to the vast world of men's knowledge.

Once arrived at real spiritual power, the true Christian cannot remain in the spirit alone. From that spiritual power the outward signs of it will flow as naturally as the leaves and flowers and fruit of trees flow from their internal action. This is not my assertion, it is the assertion of the Gospel. "And these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name they shall cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them. They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover. So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following."—Mark xvi., 17—20.

This certainly does not look much like miracles and historical facts being intended to disappear speedily and for ever. When they disappear the evidence of the inner and vital power of Christianity must disappear, for they are the outward and indispensable signs of that life.

Agreeing with the writer of these articles as to the spirituality of our faith, as to the necessity of the permeation of this spirituality through our inner being, as to the present condition of professing churches entirely, I have deemed it my duty to point out the unsoundness of his views as regards outward evidences. In so doing I trust that I shall, without detracting in the minutest degree, from the real beauty and excellence of the sounder portions of his matter, have guarded the less critical reader from falling into what are manifestly errors of a very mischievous tendency in an age like this, where so-called rationalist writers show that if they can demolish outward evidences and historic facts, they are quite sure that they have cut off the drawbridge which leads to the great castle of the Christian faith.